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ABSTRACT

New Futures, founded in 1987, is a multicity foundation-funded initiative designed to reduce the school dropout rate, teen pregnancies, and youth unemployment. The foundation's expectations for a 5-year agenda and program strategies are described in this implementation guide. Based on institutional change, the project utilizes community collaboration to improve delivery of social services to youth and build a sense of collective institutional responsibility. Five sections outline implementation strategies for the New Futures collaborative, case management, education, teen pregnancy, and youth employment. One figure is included. (LMI)

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AN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR THE NEW FUTURES INITIATIVE

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THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION
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INTRODUCTION

The seriousness of the problems afflicting too many of today's young people is now largely beyond debate. Whether it is functional illiteracy, teen pregnancy, juvenile crime, dropping out of school or inadequate preparation for work, most Americans are prepared to identify one or more of these issues as serious threats to the future of the coming generation. Put simply, too many of our nation's children are failing to grow into successful, productive adults. Not only are large numbers of students leaving high school before graduation, but an equally alarming number are graduating ill-prepared for higher education or for the increasingly competitive labor market they face. These outcomes, moreover, are likely to continue until American communities find more effective ways of defining responsibility, establishing accountability, and integrating efforts among and within the key community institutions that impact the preparation and prospects of young people.

Toward this end, The Annie E. Casey Foundation launched an initiative in 1988 to assist five cities to better prepare youth for productive adulthood. Known as "New Futures," the Initiative is an ambitious strategy designed to enable selected communities to reform institutional environments in which more young people can grow into successful, contributing adults.

The specific goals of the Initiative identified by the Foundation were: (a) to improve the academic achievement level of at-risk students; (b) to increase school attendance and graduation rates; (c) to increase

youth employment after high school; and (d) to reduce the incidence of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood.

In 1987, the Foundation began a search for five small to mid-sized American cities that, among other things, appeared willing and capable of making a visible and sustained commitment to restructuring their local youth-serving institutions. Only cities with high minority populations and severe youth problems were eligible to participate. After a lengthy screening process that included site visits to some 22 cities, ten cities were chosen to develop written plans.

Following a six-month planning process in which the ten cities developed detailed, multi-year plans, the Foundation, in April of 1988, selected five cities -- Dayton, Ohio; Lawrence, Massachusetts; Little Rock, Arkansas; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Savannah, Georgia -- each to receive between $5 million and $12 million over the next five years. Two other cities, Bridgeport, Connecticut and Rochester, New York, received smaller grants for a three year period to put into place innovative concepts developed in the planning process. To encourage the cities to use the Foundation money to leverage additional funds, the Foundation required the cities to match the Foundation resources on at least a dollar-for-dollar basis, meaning that the total five-year budget for the Initiative is expected to reach over $100 million.

The New Futures Implementation Guide, written one year into the five year funding cycle, puts the New Futures strategy into concrete terms. However, before moving into the content of the Guide, it is important that the reader understand the New Futures strategy. The Annie E. Casey Foundation believes that this strategy represents a radical departure from the traditional ways that the problems of at-risk youth have been viewed and addressed.

The New Futures Strategy

The premises underlying the New Futures strategy recognize that most serious youth problems appear to be related to circumstances that cannot easily be altered. Poverty, family background, and individual aptitudes are all measurable correlates for much of the academic under-achievement, the lack of motivation, and the high risk behavior that underlie youth problems. In some quarters, this recognition has become a defense for inaction. Schools are not responsible for the economic, social, cultural, family or individual problems that put some young people at risk; accordingly, they shouldn't be expected or held accountable for overcoming or resolving them. The same holds true for local governments, employers, community organizations, and human service agencies. At best, these institutions can try to ameliorate or remediate the individual manifestations of disadvantage, but they can do little to prevent its occurrence or frequency.

There are, of course, different perspectives, and the Casey Foundation's New Futures Initiative illustrates one such alternative point of departure. In a sense, New Futures begins in a rejection of the notion that academic failure, teen pregnancy and dropping out have to be seen exclusively as the consequences of aptitude, character or even the constraints of class, ethnicity and family status. Instead, New Futures views many of these youth problems in terms of **the failure of community institutions to do what they can do** to equip youngsters with the expectations, opportunities, supports, and incentives they need to become aspiring, responsible and successful adults.

Schools, government, business, service agencies and other local institutions have real power to create environments that actually shape the values, self-esteem, expectations and behavior of at-risk youth, in spite of persisting social and economic variables. In a sense, the New Futures strategy presumes that the shapers of community institutions have a choice. Institutions can either reinforce social and economic disadvantage by communicating (through their policy, practices, and structures) low expectations, negative labeling, cultural bias, and limited opportunity for

those at risk. Or they can address these risk factors by creating countervailing environments based on the premise that **all young people are able and are "entitled" to succeed.**

The Foundation expected that cities participating in New Futures would, as part of the Initiative, put strong emphasis on increased recognition and rewards for young people and also identify and initiate practices and policies that prevent academic disengagement, that reduce the probability of consistent failure, and that respond to risk factors before they become hardened into diminished confidence and foreclosed aspirations. We encouraged cities to take seriously the notion that all children can succeed and that each child embodies unique aptitudes, interests, vulnerabilities and needs. Our central challenge -- perhaps the critical challenge -- in the New Futures approach, is the task of making universal or broad-based institutions (i.e., schools, human service agencies, and the labor market) responsive, accessible, and attuned to a broad array of individual needs and aptitudes.

Doing so requires that cities address the fragmented manner in which youth services have historically been provided -- fragmentation that often leaves individuals with pressing needs to struggle with systems that are too incomprehensible, inaccessible, untimely or inefficient to make an effective difference with their real problems.

New Futures attempts to address this overarching fragmentation problem on behalf of youth in two fairly straightforward ways. First, New Futures requires that participating communities organize and maintain a multi-sector, politically empowered "collaborative" to initially plan and then to oversee the city's at-risk youth reform agenda. Second, through "case management," it encourages staff to integrate multiple resources, supports and services to more fully address individual needs.

This brings us to the heart of what is perhaps most significant about the whole New Futures Initiative. There are, of course, many important things involved in what these cities are trying to do. Reform of schools and curricula are crucial. Models of improved access and quality of adolescent health services are badly needed. So, too, are exemplary youth training and employment programs. If the New Futures cities achieve advances on any of these fronts, they will have made very substantial contributions.

That notwithstanding, there is more than program, policy or even single institution reform being aimed at in this endeavor. The ultimate ambition behind the concepts of collaboration and case management is to trigger and sustain a political process which is powerful enough not only to modify the services that established institutions provide, but actually to redefine institutional objectives, as well as how those institutions are held accountable and how they interrelate.

Schools alone -- even the best ones we can imagine -- will not, by themselves, be able to equip **all** young people with a real opportunity for a successful adulthood. Nor will the best conceivable "jobs compact", nor the best funded family or youth service agency. But whole communities, operating in new ways, just might be able to.

The trick is to find **a process** that allows communities to put the money, the commitment, the people, the expertise, the imagination that currently resides in organizationally and politically insulated youth-related systems -- to put all of these into the practical purpose of improving the real life prospects of real live kids.

The development of New Futures Collaboratives, combined with creation of a case management function under their control is not simply intended to "link systems." It is, instead, aimed at linking the people who control those systems **with** the needs and the problems of real children. It is hoped that Collaboratives' connection with those day-to-day problems and their confrontation with the reality that no one system can solve them will, at some point, engender a genuine sense of **collective responsibility and collective institutional accountability** for what happens to at-risk youth. That collective accountability, in turn, would provide the political context for building a youth service system that is more than the sum of its parts.

If any of the New Futures cities succeed over the next five years in moving any distance down this path of social policy change, they will not only provide enormous insight for public policy development for youth, but for all of human services as well. There is in all this, succeed or fail, an enormous opportunity to learn.

The Purpose of The New Futures Implementation Guide

Each of five sections that follow -- New Futures Collaborative, Case Management, Education, Teen Pregnancy, Youth Employment, and Finance -- provides cities with the Foundation's best thinking regarding effective strategies that can carry forth the New Futures agenda. However, The New Futures Implementation Guide is not intended to be a prescriptive or "how to" manual. Rather, it lays out the Foundation's expectations for where it believes New Futures cities should be at the end of five years, and guidance, in the form of suggested ideas and approaches that they may use as means to achieve these ends. We believe it to be a provocative document that can help cities examine their progress, spur new thinking, prod productive debate, and catalyze creative interventions in policy and practice.

The Foundation views The New Futures Implementation Guide as an iterative piece that will continue to evolve over the life of this Initiative. We envision that in years to come additional pertinent sections will be added and that existing sections will be expanded and strengthened to include the lessons learned in on-going implementation of this unique approach to addressing the needs of young people.

NEW FUTURES COLLABORATIVE

I. Overview

Leaders in the New Futures cities and staff at the Annie E. Casey Foundation frequently describe New Futures as being "more than just another project". To a great extent the difference lies in the view that **New Futures is about institutional change**, about **creating a process** of change leading to fundamental and long lasting differences in the way at-risk youth are perceived and served.

The Collaborative -- a body of influential community leaders and community representatives -- is the primary vehicle for sustaining this process of change, and is at the heart of New Futures. We see the Collaborative as a powerful advocate for youth which defines the agenda, builds consensus, and moves the community to break down the barriers which prevent youth from growing up to be successful and productive adults.

To be an effective force for change the New Futures Collaborative needs to be:

A. Recognized by existing institutions and the community at large as being a central vehicle through which the needs of young people are identified, regularly communicated, and held up as high priority issues in the community. Further, the Collaborative must be seen as a legitimate forum for critiquing the effectiveness of current practices and responses and for advocating improvement in services.

B. Visible to the community at large as a central participant in the planning, evaluation, funding, and delivery of services to youth. It is only with broad community support that the Collaborative will be able to affect real and lasting changes.

C. Accountable to the community for the results of efforts to aid at-risk youth, with specific attention to the community wide goals established and endorsed in support of the New Futures Initiative. By holding the participants, and the Collaborative itself, to known and measurable goals, the New Futures Collaborative generates the level of commitment needed to make difficult changes.

In each of the New Futures cities the Collaborative functions, at a minimum, as the governing body or board of directors of the New Futures Initiative. In that role it takes responsibility for the performance of New Futures staff, for The Annie E. Casey Foundation funds and related matching funds, for carrying out agreements negotiated with the Foundation. Existing Collaboratives seem well equipped and fully committed to performing these vital functions.

Yet, if the ambitious goals adopted for New Futures are to be achieved, the Collaborative needs over time to go beyond the management of the initial New Futures effort and assert itself as a broader, more permanent forum for change in the community at large. The Collaborative assumes this larger, broadly focused role in large part by declaring its intention to be more than a project board, and by acting - even in the early stages of New Futures - as a body with legitimate concern for all of what is happening around at-risk youth in the cities.

This movement will not occur easily or automatically. It will occur as a result of conscious actions that move the Collaborative incrementally towards a central community role. It will require commitment from Collaborative members and a common vision of the role the Collaborative needs to play.

To date the Foundation has tended to focus on the potential of the Collaborative and has said little about how it needs to function in

order to fulfill its potential. This section of the Implementation Guide seeks to move the discussion of New Futures Collaboratives to a more operational level, to describe how the Collaborative might function as a force in local communities.

II. The Functions of The Collaborative

The New Futures Collaborative derives its authority and legitimacy from both its membership and its functions. Appointed by legitimate authority, and containing a broad spectrum of community leaders and community representatives, the Collaborative is empowered to be a voice which defines the needs of youth and a central force in the design and implementation of community responses to those needs.

Central to the functioning of the New Futures Collaborative are three fundamental activities:

- a continuing process of **identifying the problems of at-risk youth,** as well the implications for the community at large if these problems are not adequately addressed;

- a continuing process of **evaluating the sufficiency and effectiveness of current efforts** to address the problems of at-risk youth; and

- a continuing process of **acting to improve the community's responses** to the problems of at-risk youth.

Description and analysis of the problems of at-risk youth: During the initial planning phase for New Futures, cities were asked to review and analyze the factors in their communities that lead to school failure, teen pregnancy, and youth unemployment.
New Futures Collaboratives carry the responsibility for a **continuing** review of these issues.

An **ongoing** review of the problems of youth can serve several purposes:

1. Done in a public, visible forum like the Collaborative, review and re-review of youth problems can serve to raise community awareness of the nature, extent, and seriousness of the problems of at-risk youth in

the community. **A raised level of community awareness and the fostering of a community sense of urgency are necessary prerequisites to creating a climate for institutional change.**

The Collaborative has a variety of resources available to it in assessing the problems of youth, including:

- o the experience, expertise and resources of member agencies and their staff;
- o the growing experience of New Futures case managers;
- o the ongoing comprehensive evaluation conducted by the Center for the Study of Social Policy; and
- o the real life experience of Collaborative members, youth in the community, service providers, parents, and others.

By skillfully using and merging the many sources of information available to it, the Collaborative can paint a picture of youth problems that effectively communicates to a wide community audience.

2. Despite earlier assessment processes we still do not know enough, at national or local levels, about at-risk youth and their problems. **In order to plan the most effective community responses the Collaborative needs, for example, to better understand the interrelationship of youth problems.** To what extent are school drop-outs involved with the Juvenile Court? To what extent are youth in summer job programs reading below grade level? What is the prevalence of drug use among youth failing in school?

By better understanding youth problems - statistics, demographics, causes, coincidence - the Collaborative can best fashion effective responses.

3. **In addition, the Collaborative can play an important advocacy role by raising community awareness of the consequences of youth problems, both for the youth themselves and for the community as a whole.** Communities pay a high price, sooner or later, for inadequate attention to the problems of youth: public assistance costs, community safety, lost productivity, etc. The continuing assessment of youth problems needs to speak to these short and long term costs, if it is to raise public consciousness and create a sense of urgency about dealing with the problems of youth.

However, Collaborative members and New Futures administrators need to assure that the analysis of youth problems is more than a pro forma annual statistics gathering event. Rather, the data is gathered and **used** to guide the future efforts of the community. It is used as the central foundation for carefully thought out and planned responses that fit the problems as identified.

Critique of current practice: Having obtained a baseline of understanding of the state of at-risk youth, the Collaborative should turn to an evaluation of the community's current response. The Collaborative ought not limit its scope narrowly to the performance of narrowly defined youth serving agencies or programs. Other forces in the community have important impacts on youth as well. For example, the actions and attitudes of the media, of law enforcement, and of local business may frame the environment in which youth grow up, form a perception of themselves, and adopt views of the opportunities and possibilities available to them.

In reviewing current practice Collaboratives will want to consider the following, not all-inclusive, set of issues:

- To what extent do the services being offered meet the needs of at-risk youth and fit with the Collaborative's view of the problems?

- Are some services "off target" i.e. directed at minor problems, or less at-risk populations, while more significant issues and populations are under-served?

- What does the New Futures evaluation, the reports of local service providers, the case managers, tell us about the impact and availability of services?

- What are the trends in community response - what is there more of, less of? What is being delivered differently or to a different population?

- What plans are already on the drawing boards of community, state or federal agencies which will augment or alter current service delivery?

- How are community funds received, planned for, and spent? What opportunities exist to re-direct funds towards what the Collaborative believes to be more appropriate uses? Are the constraints on funding use historical, political, or legal? How can these constraints be overcome?

- How do agencies in the community coordinate their service delivery when working with the same youth or family? How do they communicate with each other as to goals, progress, plans?

- What policies are in place which seem to work against the achievement of New Futures goals? How are these policies established, what is the process for policy change?

In this review process the Collaborative needs to find ways that it is comfortable with to conduct this ongoing inquiry. The process of "evaluation" ought not necessarily conjure up visions confined to print-

outs, statistical reports, and hundred page documents. Data can be a conversation with a youth, an anecdotal experience of a case manager, a visit to a program, an oral report by an administrator, as well as a more formal report.

Joint vehicle for improvement: It falls to the Collaborative, informed as to both the problems of youth and the current community response, to take actions to move the community, over the long term, to increased or more effective responses. In large measure this may become an effort to find a "better fit" between problem and response.

Improvement in community services can take three forms:

- the establishment of more effective service delivery through changes that effect the relationships among agencies;
- changes within an institution that improve its efficiency or effectiveness, that alter the targeting of its resources, or create changed and more appropriate policy; and/or
- the creation of additional resources in areas where current efforts are simply insufficient.

Relationships among agencies: The problems of youth are often multi-faceted and complex. The service delivery system designed over a period of decades to serve them often presents a bewildering array of services that are confusing to the youth and their families, that are often poorly coordinated, and that may at times work at cross purposes.

Programs and agencies are fragmented, not only at the direct service delivery level, but also at administrative and policy levels. More often than not individual efforts are planned, designed, implemented, and funded with little regard to, and little knowledge of, other related efforts.

The New Futures Collaborative can serve as a vehicle for pulling these separate efforts together to form a community response to the problems of youth. The focus of the Collaborative's efforts should be on three areas: case management, coordinated planning, and coordinated budgeting.

o **Case Management**

In the Strategic Planning Guide and later in the Implementation Guide the Foundation has advocated for the development of case managed service delivery systems that provide coordinated services to youth and their families. The Collaborative's role in sponsoring, supporting, and using a case managed delivery system is critical to that component's success.

Case management will only be accepted by community agencies if it is viewed as the legitimate, service delivery activity of a community wide collaborative effort. Standing alone, without the active support of the Collaborative, the case management effort will be perceived as an unwarranted intrusion in agency functioning and an expensive layering of service delivery.

While individual case managers can, for an individual youth, make the system "work", it is the responsibility of the Collaborative and New Futures management to see to it that institutions and agencies develop agreements and procedures that set the stage for coordinated service delivery. While Collaborative members and the Collaborative as a whole need not always deal with the details of such agreements, the Collaborative needs to send a clear and consistent message that coordinated service delivery is expected and is necessary to the achievement of community goals.

The success of the case management effort to create integrated services and the Collaborative's efforts to create integrated community approaches to youth are closely linked and mutually dependent. Without a successful direct service delivery impact by case management the Collaborative may succeed in creating only political and administrative coordination, but may not impact youth and their families. Case management, at the service delivery level, can only succeed to the extent that the Collaborative is able to forge significant alliances among institutions and create the climate necessary for integrated service delivery.

Further, the case management system is seen as a vital source of first hand information for the Collaborative on how the system is working. Case managers are a particularly valuable source of information because they tend to be new to the system, are administratively independent of mainstream youth service agencies, and are involved on a daily basis in cross-system efforts to help youth. Collaboratives need to consider how best to access the information gained by case managers and need to stress the importance of case management as a problem identifying process.

See the Case Management section of this Guide for a further discussion of the case management portion of the initiative.

o **Coordinated Planning**

Each institution and agency in the community has a planning process. For some it may be formalized, may be annual or multi-year, or may involve dedicated planning staff and a set of well established procedures. For others planning may be less formal, more difficult to separate from the day to day management process, and more difficult to isolate as a separate "planning function". Yet every organization plans.

In much the same way as the Collaborative advocates for coordinated service delivery to individuals and families - through case management - the Collaborative needs also to advocate for, and provide the vehicle for, a coordinated planning process.

It is not at all uncommon, in fact it is far more the rule than the exception, for community agencies to independently develop initiatives without any consultation from others in the community who serve the same population and/or provide similar services.

Often, this fragmentation of effort comes not as a result of ill will between agencies, nor the result of empire building or turf protection. Most often the lack of coordinated planning comes as a result of a lack of opportunity and requirement to do otherwise. Agencies face planning requirements from funding sources that are inconsistent as to time frame (different fiscal or program years), level of detail, language, and purpose.

The results of un-coordinated planning are clear: inefficient use of

resources, duplication of effort, gaps in service, and lack of clear understanding among agencies of what services are available.

In preparation for a coordinated planning effort, the New Futures Collaborative needs to become familiar with the planning processes now in practice. It will only be possible to "sell" coordinated planning if all possible efforts are made to reduce to a minimum the extent to which this process is layered on to existing agency requirements. Who produces what kind of document, on what kind of time schedule? What is the critical time to build in a role for multi-agency involvement under the sponsorship of the Collaborative? (The planning effort needs to be neither so late nor so early in the process that it fails to effect the plans.)

Coordinated planning in specific areas will be useful to the Collaborative in its effort to improve service delivery. Over time, by aggregating the data derived from a coordinated planning process, the Collaborative may wish to the create an "umbrella" community youth plan -- one that describes the activities and plans of numerous providers and offers a picture of the community's direction in service provision. Such a document can be a useful tool in evaluating community responses and garnering broad community support.

- **Coordinated Budgeting**

The budgets of agencies ought, in a perfect world, be the fiscal representation of their plans. There ought be a strong correlation between what the agency seeks to accomplish and how it proposes to spend its resources.

Like the planning process, individual agencies and institutions operate in cycles, use a language and format that may be unique, and budget in response to the requirements of funding sources. And, like the planning process, the Collaborative needs to understand current practice if it is to fashion a shared mechanism that is not so burdensome that it will fall of its own weight. (It may be that the Collaborative finds that the planning and budgeting practices are so interwoven that attempting to separate them would produce an artificial process that would be foreign

to the participants, and therefore more difficult to embrace.)

In the coordinated budgeting process, as in planning and in assessment of youth problems, the Collaborative needs to stress that its scope is more than the matching funds for a narrowly defined New Futures pilot project. Funds in New Futures, while large for a project, are dwarfed by the annual budgets of school districts, social service agencies, United Ways, and others.

New Futures seeks to tailor the community's responses to the problems that are present. To do so may require that funds be re-directed from their current use and be made less categorical, and that agencies develop "pooled" funding or joint or multiple agency funding practices. This goal, while simple to state, is difficult to achieve. Every categorical funding regulation represents someone's belief that one goal, or one target population, or one category of service, ought take precedence over others. Alteration of the assumptions and beliefs that target funds may require careful planning, good data, considerable political skill, and the patience required for a long term effort.

If the New Futures Collaborative is to impact the **system** that serves at-risk youth, it needs to stake its claim for influence over the whole budget, the whole plan. Piecemeal attempts to change systems at the margins - by adding a special program or creating a small discretionary grant - have historically failed to produce lasting or fundamental change.

The Collaborative is, after all, made up in large measure by individuals representing organizations and institutions already responsible for major pieces of the youth service system and its funding. What is called for is a gradually emerging **shared** responsibility not just for the parts, but for the whole. By accepting responsibility for the whole problem, by holding itself accountable for results, the Collaborative adopts a **community** responsibility for the community's youth.

Individual agency effectiveness: Some needed improvements in the youth service system may be confined to the historically "internal" activities of a constituent agency. For example, a social service eligibility

requirement may be so narrowly drawn that it creates a target population too small for the problem it seeks to address, a youth employment assessment practice may screen out youth most in need, a school policy may be working to exclude a-risk youth from needed services, the location of a health program may make it inaccessible to youth, or the hours of a counseling program may conflict with school attendance. The best evidence is that the approach used in one program is ineffective.

The Collaborative is not intended to replace the governing bodies of community agencies. It does not replace the school board, the welfare board, the United Way, or the boards of directors of non-profit agencies. As such the Collaborative cannot "order" changes in individual agency practice and cannot override the policies established by the legitimate authority of boards of directors.

The Collaborative creates change primarily through its influence, through its ability to forge community consensus. It presents a persuasive case, based on the information it has available, on its broad view of services across agencies, and on the results or lack of results it sees, that change is needed. And it communicates that case, respectfully, to the organization directly responsible.

By acknowledging the legitimate authority of long standing boards and organizations the Collaborative does not accept a passive role. It does not become still another advisory body whose recommendations are often ignored. The Collaborative, as a result of its membership, its role in the community, its visibility, and the collective influence of its members (acting not as individuals but as a group) will be able to attract attention to its views and recommendations. Yet, the Collaborative, most particularly when dealing in previously internal, single agency matters, will be most effective when using its power and influence judiciously, strategically, and in ways that do not result in embarrassment or blame.

Increasing the resources for at-risk youth: Each New Futures Collaborative bears the minimum responsibility for identifying sources of matching funds for The Annie E. Casey grant, and for identifying and securing replacement funds for the time when Foundation funds become

unavailable. These important functions have been accepted by New Futures Collaboratives in their role as stewards of the New Futures Initiative.

Inevitably, however, the Collaborative's review of youth problems and current responses will identify some areas in which the community's response, however well designed and delivered, and its level of funding, are insufficient. This is not to suggest that additional funding is either a cure all or the best first response to a finding of insufficient effort. Indeed, it is likely that better coordination, more flexible funding, tighter and more appropriate targeting, earlier and more preventive interventions, can do much to improve community response without additional funds.

The Collaborative must pursue, as a matter of strategy, politics, and good management, an initial course that focuses on better use of existing resources, prior to the solicitation of added resources. It is likely, however, in varying degrees perhaps, that each Collaborative will identify areas where all the efficiencies that are possible simply do not make up for insufficient funding.

Given its position in the community the New Futures Collaborative can and should play an effective role in raising public consciousness, identifying needed resources, making a case for the need, identifying possible sources of funding, and developing the support needed to secure such funding. The Collaborative can effectively identify not only the short term costs of needed interventions, but also the long term costs of inaction.

The Collaborative's willingness to advocate for additional resources for constituent institutions (adequate school budget, increased infant-care slots, etc.) represents one of the very real and tangible benefits for supporting the Collaborative. Collaboratives may, after study, end up supporting increased school levies, or supporting increased flexibility in the use of state funds, or advocating for policy changes in areas that hamper the effectiveness of local programs.

III. Development of the Collaborative

We have set out in the preceding pages a considerable agenda for New Futures Collaboratives, one that will not be achieved easily or overnight. In order to move incrementally towards playing the role set out, Collaboratives need first to take the time to self-assess where they are in relation to their ultimate goals.

We suggest that the following issues frame the content of that assessment:

A. How can the members of the New Futures Collaborative gain a uniform view of the role of the Collaborative and of their individual responsibilities as Collaborative members?

The role of the Collaborative is not easily described or easily internalized. Participants are asked, in a sense, to wear "two hats" - to continue to carry out their duties to their agency, organization, or constituency, while to some extent subordinating at least their short term interests to larger, longer term goals. **If Collaborative members approach their duties from widely different perspectives, if significant numbers take a minimal grant oversight view, if the role of the Collaborative is blurred and reactive, then New Futures success is in doubt.**

One way to build consensus about the role of the Collaborative is to work hard and seriously on a detailed Mission Statement that captures the essence of the Collaborative. The Mission Statement should contain an ambitious long term view of the Collaborative that makes clear to members, and to the community at large, what commitments Collaborative membership entails.

All too often the creation of mission statements becomes an exercise in semantics, and that is not suggested here. Rather, we suggest that an adequate amount of time be set out to debate and discuss what the Collaborative is to be, and that the debate continue until true consensus and common goals are reached.

The discussion of mission may best be framed in the context of an

agreed vision of what a successfully functioning Collaborative would look like, what it would be doing, and what results it could achieve. The vision should be an idealized "big picture" of what the state of human services and at-risk youth might look like when a local New Futures Initiative has been fully set up and is operating well.

The membership of the Oversight Collaborative needs to collectively develop and clearly communicate its own localized version of the Foundation's vision of New Futures. It is this snapshot of a good thing ahead -- something that all local institutions **want** -- that will provide the primary, motivating force for institutions to buy-in up-front, and to change behavior over time.

B. Given its Mission, how can the Collaborative bring together the right participants?

The composition of the Oversight Collaborative should reflect all the key community actors that can contribute to an effective system for youth. It should include among its membership influential decision makers - the individuals who control resources that affect the environment for a integrated system of services for young people.

This group ought include, and often does in New Futures cities, local elected officials, chief executive officers of youth serving institutions, representatives of major funding sources, and others. This portion of the Collaborative membership represents, within practical limits, those individuals and organizations now responsible for a majority of current community efforts for youth. The presence of these members lends legitimacy to the New Futures Collaborative and brings both the individual expertise of members and the considerable support of their organizations.

In addition the Collaborative should involve other critical sectors of the community, business leaders, the clergy, law enforcement, and especially individuals who represent potential recipients of services, so that the Collaborative has feedback about the needs of youth and the system's performance.

Membership on the Collaborative often includes political, service delivery, and business representatives who by virtue of their positions and authority carry the responsibility for assuring that the Collaborative is sufficiently empowered to carry out its mission. It is critically important that the Collaborative contain, as well, individuals who have first hand and ongoing contact with the service delivery system - youth, parents, direct service providers.

The inclusion of these individuals on the Collaborative has a numbers of purposes:

- it provides the Collaborative as a whole with ongoing, reality based insights into the problems of and services to at-risk youth and their families;

- it serves to break down the barriers between the recipients of service and the community at large - it lessens the feelings of "us" and "them"; and

- it lends legitimacy to the New Futures initiative as a whole by providing a voice for youth, minorities, and others.

The inclusion of non-traditional Collaborative members ought not be an exercise in tokenism. An unprepared and frightened youth who does not actively participate, or an honor student or class president who does, lends little credibility to the process. Institutional leaders come well-armed to their roles on the Oversight Collaborative. Others for whom participation in this sort of process is new may not.

All members will need a comprehensive orientation to the role of New Futures and its Oversight Collaborative. All will need to understand their personal roles on the Oversight Collaborative.

Youth members of the Collaborative may require additional special attention to become empowered and organized if they are to play an active role as full partners on the Oversight Collaborative. (Little Rock

has done considerable work to prepare their youth representatives on the Collaborative, for example, and would no doubt share their experience with other cities.)

Bringing community representatives, youth, parents, and others into collaborative membership may be only the beginning -- the tip of the iceberg -- of community involvement in the Collaborative. Some New Futures cities are involving communities, neighborhoods, and interested individuals in the Collaborative through a variety of other means.

Advisory Committees to the Collaborative, task forces on specific issues, Parent's Councils, and/or linkages to various associations with similar or related interests can be effectively used to spread the collaborative process well beyond the members themselves. In reaching out in these ways, the Collaborative can add to its knowledge base, increase support and awareness in the community at-large, and most importantly, open up channels through which new voices can be heard and can play a role in community decision making.

The agenda for the New Futures Collaborative cannot be effectively carried out solely at Collaborative meetings. In fact, the Collaborative meeting ought be the culmination of considerable up-front work rather than the occasion of that work. Similarly, the staff work for the New Futures Collaborative cannot and should not be carried out solely by New Futures staff.

Leaders are not the only ones who should be involved in planning. Middle management and line staff from constituent institutions ought to have a role as well, and processes need to be developed to bring key agency staff -- beyond the chief executive -- into the New Futures effort. Those who are not involved in planning will not "own" New Futures. It will feel like they are being handed someone else's project, fait accompli. And because it is not their project, they will not have a strong commitment to it. They may even go so far as to sabotage it.

C. How can the Collaborative best organize to do the job?

The work of a body such as the New Futures Collaborative will

not be done in one two hour meeting per month. Like most organizations, the Collaborative can probably best be judged by what goes on **between** meetings.

- Has the Collaborative established sub-committees, advisory committees, task forces, or other structures to focus on issues and tasks that require more time and attention than is possible at a full Collaborative meeting?

- Has the Collaborative, in establishing the above structures, been successful in attracting parents, youth, and minorities to these bodies?

- Has the Collaborative formed linkages with neighborhood associations, parent's associations, and others to broaden the collaborative process?

- Is there sufficient staff support, on an ongoing basis, to aid Collaborative members by gathering information, framing issues, providing clerical support, etc.?

- Are issues brought to the Collaborative with sufficient up-front preparation, i.e. materials mailed in advance, thorough analysis, clear recommendations?

- Does the Collaborative have a work plan which represents an agreed upon schedule of issues to be addressed, tasks to be performed?

- Given considerable demand for attention to the operation of pilot efforts, the development of community awareness, and the process of inter-agency communication, does New Futures have sufficient staff resources to look also at the long term, community wide issues? Are staff available in

constituent institutions whose efforts can be incorporated into or used in concert with New Futures staff?

- What information does the Collaborative need/want in order to perform its role? How often, in what format, does the Collaborative need regular reports? What need exists for "special" reports - i.e. analyses of issues, problems, that are "of the moment"?

IV. Second Year Activities

New Futures has come a long way in less than a year of operation. Yet much remains to be done. The development of the New Futures Collaborative is seen as a long term, incremental process leading to a significant set of changes in the way in which institutions define the problems of at-risk youth, plan services for them, receive funding, and relate to one another. It is an ambitious agenda, unprecedented in its scope and complexity.

Based on our review of the progress of New Futures cities to date, we recommend the following second year activities:

A. As suggested earlier, the Collaborative should continue its ongoing process of **identifying** the problems of youth, **evaluating** the impact of efforts to help youth, and **sponsoring improvements** in community response.

The Collaborative should pay particular attention to major **policy** barriers which thwart efforts to aid at-risk youth. A number of such issues were identified in some cities in the Planning Phase, identified further in Evaluation reports, and are being uncovered by case managers. The ways in which the Collaborative addresses policy barriers will be a touchstone issue in the success or failure of New Futures.

B. Each New Futures city should thoroughly assess its progress in the development and operation of the New Futures Collaborative. Included in that self-assessment should be attention to the Collaborative's **mission**, its **composition**, and its **capacity** to fulfill its responsibilities.

C. In each New Futures city Collaborative members and New Futures administrators should become knowledgeable about the planning and budgeting processes of constituent institutions, with an eye towards **developing processes** for coordinated planning and

shared decision making on budgets that are as free of administrative burden as possible.

Whether the Collaborative commissions a study of existing planning/budgeting practices, or establishes a sub-committee, or invites discussion at Collaborative meetings, the Collaborative needs to develop a "plan for planning" that is feasible and acceptable.

D. Each New Futures Collaborative should identify specific well defined areas in which to begin perfecting a process of **coordinated planning and budgeting**. In may be that in the long run that the greatest benefit of these early efforts will be more in the **process** of testing ways to operate jointly than in the actual changes made in service delivery or policy. Some suggested areas of inquiry might be:

- A review of plans for youth employment, with particular attention paid to the linkages between youth employment services and other service components: schools, the courts, public assistance, etc.;

- A review of plans for students who are parents, with particular attention to the interrelationship between the efforts of school, health, social service and other agencies on their behalf; and

- A review of the relationship between efforts of the Juvenile Court, New Futures staff, and other related agencies.

The above are, again, simply suggestions. The Collaborative needs to identify its own targets of opportunity, to find areas of inquiry which are neither so large that they cannot be effectively addressed at this time,

nor so small as to be tangential to central New Futures goals.

E. The Collaborative needs to pay particular attention to **resource building,** including both shorter term issues relating to replacement of The Annie E. Casey funds in the sixth year and the longer term issues of the overall sufficiency of funding for at-risk youth efforts. The initial step in this process should be a review and evaluation of the Collaborative's investment of resources in the resource development area. Are there staff devoted to this effort? Is there a sub-committee of the Collaborative -- a "6th year committee"?

Members of the Collaborative need to develop a detailed understanding of funding for youth services in the community -- sources, uses, target populations, restrictions on use, how allocation decisions are made, etc. This level of understanding is required for the Collaborative to play an effective role in re-directing funds towards effective youth programs.

V. Technical Assistance Plan

Over the next twelve months, the Foundation and the New Futures Institute will combine forces with outside consultants to deliver training and technical assistance on the following topics:

- o developing a localized "vision" of New Futures;
- o negotiating/mediating written agreements with institutional partners;
- o establishing a coordinated planning and budgeting structure;
- o using evaluation results in ongoing planning;
- o involving parents in the partnership process;
- o developing a case management system (see the "case management" chapter); and
- o addressing financial management issues.

CASE MANAGEMENT

I. Overview

In this paper the Annie E. Casey Foundation seeks to sharpen its vision of case management in New Futures. Readers may wish to refer as well to the Strategic Planning Guide.

The Foundation sees the New Futures case management system as an active agent for change which seeks to pull disparate service delivery systems together on behalf of at-risk kids. Further, the installation of a case management system is seen as one of the chief ways in which a New Futures Collaborative can act as an advocate both for kids and for policy reform. Finally, the case management system is seen as a fertile source of information for the Collaborative, as the system reports on what is working well and what is not.

However, our observations of actual implementation of case management in New Futures cities tells us that there are considerable pressures to allow case management to drift towards what has been described as "the fourth program", i.e. a drop-out prevention program, a teen pregnancy prevention program, a youth unemployment program, and now a case management program.

The Foundation has previously described the spectrum of case management thinking and implementation as falling into three broad categories:

- The case manager as "Super-Counselor": In this model, direct intervention of the case manager (as mentor, friend, counselor, significant adult) is paramount;

- The case manager as "Traffic Cop": This model sees the case manager primarily in the role of making referrals for service and arranging or "brokering" to help a child and family navigate through the service delivery system; and

- The case manager as an "Agent of the Collaborative": In this role the Foundation sees the case manager as both a counselor and broker, and in addition as the eyes and ears of the Collaborative. The case management system plays an active role in identifying system shortfalls and in negotiating and advocating for system change.

Implementation of case management as simply an additional service delivery system runs the risk of building a new layer of services on top of the existing system, **without changing anything about how that system helps kids.** This kind of "layering" presents many problems, one of which is the difficulty in institutionalizing a new layer that seems to be no more than a duplication of what already exists.

The Strategic Planning Guide has been well received in New Futures cities. A consensus has emerged that case management needs to be more than a strategy for increased service delivery and attention for at-risk kids. Rather, the case management system needs to be a force for institutional change. It needs to foster comprehensive and coordinated service delivery while at the same time identifying and correcting system weaknesses.

The case management system, of course, cannot fulfill this mission solely through the acts of individual case managers working with individual kids. The Collaborative, through its influence and power to direct funds and to call for policy change, must support the case management effort as part of its support for New Futures goals. The

Collaborative must look beyond the New Futures case management agency itself and ask all service delivery agencies to actively participate in the development of integrated service delivery.

The Collaborative must look beyond the New Futures case management agency itself and ask all service delivery agencies to actively participate in the development of integrated service delivery. Some New Futures participants believe that, while a central coordinating service delivery mechanism is needed, an organization other than the New Futures lead agency might effectively perform these functions.

The Foundation has been open to a number of organizational strategies as regards New Futures case management including, in Dayton, a case management agency which operates under an independent Board of Directors and which is an independent not-for-profit corporation called "Community Connections". Community Connections, while a separate agency, is linked to the Collaborative in a variety of ways and may prove ultimately to act as a buffer between the Collaborative and day to day implementation and administrative details.

It should be noted that, in discussing operations in the material that follows, we have tended to describe a case management system that is operated by the New Futures lead agency. we do so because this comes closest to describing current reality in the New Futures cities, not because we see such a structure as the only acceptable model.

Despite the presence of an emerging conceptual consensus, New Futures cities have asked the Foundation for guidance on the more operational issues surrounding case management. If we agree on what it ought to be in the abstract, how do we actually set it up? This paper seeks to begin a more detailed, more operational discussion of case management in New Futures cities. Over time additional papers will be written and distributed, hopefully with increasing specificity as lessons are learned in the New Futures cities.

II. Foundation Expectations

As the Foundation sees the role of case management in New Futures, it will have a far reaching and clearly observable impact on cities and service delivery for youth. In a city with a fully implemented New Futures Case Management system, at least the following will be found:

- o At-risk youth served by several agencies will be served in a coordinated and comprehensive way.

The services that they receive will be based on a broad assessment of their strengths, weaknesses, and circumstances. Those services will be described in a specific, written "case plan" which will be developed cooperatively by several agencies in consultation with the youth and his/her parents.

- o The progress or lack of progress achieved as a result of the case plan will be monitored by a New Futures case manager.

Once again this will be done in concert with the youth and parents, and necessary modifications will be made if progress is insufficient.

- o Agencies and organizations in the community will recognize the unique and central coordinating role played by the New Futures case management system and case managers.

- o The New Futures case manager, who will work with the youth over a period of years, will be seen by the child as an advocate, working in his/her best interest.

- o The New Futures Collaborative will be informed about and guided by the actual experience of the New Futures case management system as it identifies successes, failures, roadblocks, non-responsiveness, etc.

The Collaborative, through its power and influence, will seek to create more effective programming, to change policies that work to the detriment of at-risk kids or are ineffective, and to support program efforts that are working well or show promise.

- The New Futures Collaborative, in concert with the larger community it represents, will have developed and implemented financial plans which will support the expansion and maintenance of service coordination and service integration efforts as permanent parts of the service delivery agenda.

Without sound financial support, the case management system will seem always to be ad hoc, always an add on.

No one suggests that the development and installation of the system described above will be easy. To the contrary, the development of an integrated, child-centered service delivery system is extremely difficult. It will require very hard work over a long period of time to be successful. Pay-offs will not be immediate; and political, financial, and programmatic risks will have to be taken.

It is easier to go with the current flow. And it is far easier to use New Futures case managers as gap filling staff who do what the rest of the professionals in town lack the time to do and who pay attention to kids who are lost to the established system. The Foundation strongly believes, however, that an effort of this sort will fail to substantially change the environment in which at-risk youth are served, will fail to create significant change, and will not last much longer than Foundation funding.

III. Case Management Functions

For a number of years most writing and discussion about case management has identified five functions which case managers perform: **assessment, case planning, linking, monitoring, and advocacy.** While case management in New Futures differs in some ways from most case management that has been done, these differences are largely in the scope of the program and its political context. Operationally the five classic functions seem to define quite well what a case manager actually does in New Futures.

The chart at the end of this section depicts case management functions as developed in a non-New Futures program. It is reproduced here not because it should be adopted for New Futures, but rather to show that a picture of client flow can be a powerful tool in understanding and explaining case management. The foundation encourages cities to work on detailed client flow documents -- as graphic as possible -- showing the system as it is and as each city hopes it will be.

We take particular note of the "EXIT" outcome on this sample chart. It occurs when the client is able to do his/her own case management. In other words, we see New Futures as working towards helping youth to become competent, independent, and self-reliant adults.

We believe that discussing case management in the context of the five functions previously mentioned is helpful in cities since most "competing" and already existing case management efforts in the cities are likely using these terms as well. Each of the functions is further described below:

1. Assessment

All service delivery starts with an assessment. Somebody, in some way, decides what the situation is, what the problem is, and what the client is all about. The at-risk kids which New Futures is intended to serve are not without assessments in their lives. In various file cabinets around town there may be a health assessment performed by a physician,

a mental health assessment performed by a psychologist, a study conducted by a juvenile court worker, a child welfare agency report on the child or his/her family, and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) assessment at the school. Or, for kids who are at-risk but quietly so, there may be none of these things.

Each agency, organization, or program conducts an assessment which is filtered through their organization's role or mission and through the professional training of their staff. Beyond such items as name, address, and age the file at the physician's office will contain very little information in common with the juvenile court file. Each program screens information in or out based on its relevancy to the services which that program offers, and each discipline interprets information according to its biases.

This fragmented approach to serving youth goes to the very heart of New Futures. The Annie E. Casey Foundation believes that someone in the youth's life, the New Futures case manager, needs to look at the **whole** child. Since we encourage a long term, caring relationship between the case manager and the child, there are a great many non-traditional pieces of data that a New Futures case manager will hopefully pick up such as who has a crush on whom and other relationship issues, the child's dreams and fantasies, leisure time preferences, the sense of humor that he/she has, etc. In other words, we encourage knowing the youth as a person.

The Role of the Case Manager in Assessment: New Futures is not the first program in town, nor the largest or best funded, and it may not be the first in contact with a child. The health, education, court and other systems will not disband with the advent of New Futures. They will continue to conduct their particular brand of assessment, for their legitimate program purposes, despite the coming of New Futures.

How then does the New Futures case manager conduct an assessment that does not simply add another layer of assessment? What good is one more report in one more file?

In the best of situations the New Futures case management system can serve as a powerful force on behalf of kids if it can perform the following roles in the assessment process:

- **serve as a catalyst** to bring together the various assessments being conducted. This may involve convening meetings of the various agencies involved with a child/family or reviewing a number of written assessments or both;

- **perform an analytical function.** This may involve noting and pointing out that assessments regarding the child's intellectual functioning are contradictory or are complementary with respect to his mother's attitude (i.e. everyone sees her as supportive);

- **synthesize the information coming from various assessments,** including the case manager's own assessment, into a single, comprehensive picture of the child, family and circumstances;

- **note the absence of what might be critical data.** For example we may know that a student is not motivated, falls asleep in class, etc. yet it appears that she has not had a physical exam in three years. Therefore, we cannot rule out a health problem;

- **provide help to other assessors** by providing or confirming factual information, suggesting an approach, etc. This will develop over time since the New Futures case manager will likely come to know the youth better than most service providers who may be involved for shorter periods of time and/or for narrower reasons;

- **create efficiencies in the overall assessment** area by substituting an existing assessment for a new one. For example, why ask a juvenile court worker to do a background report when one already exists?

- **influence the system's assessment processes** by encouraging child/family participation in the assessment or by presenting issues as the child might see them.

2. **Case Planning**

The assessment should guide the development of a series of corrective actions: a case plan. In most organizations the case plan focuses on what that organization will do and how it will carry out its assigned responsibilities in a particular case. Rarely does an agency case plan note what other organizations are simultaneously doing.

The case plan developed in New Futures ought be more than a description of what the New Futures case manager will do. A New Futures case plan should summarize the assessment findings and set out a comprehensive plan for services based on that assessment which can reasonably be expected to produce improvement in the critical areas of difficulty.

It should be noted that some at-risk kids will exhibit so many problems that the most difficult task is knowing where to start. Any case plan that attempts to simultaneously address a dozen different needs will fail.

It further should be noted that the New Futures case manager should initially define a case plan that is ideal. That is, the plan should not be built out of known and accessible resources but out of the particular needs of the child. This process of individualizing and idealizing serves two purposes. First, it avoids the "one size fits all" process of case planning that so often characterizes categorical service delivery systems, e.g. no matter what the problem is we give 50 minute counseling sessions once a week. **New Futures case managers ought not**

be bound in their thinking by what services exist in the community. Instead, they ought to be encouraged to think also about what services ought to exist.

Second, an individualized case plan creates (if captured) a data base that can advise the Collaborative and others about community needs. The Collaborative ought to know not only what New Futures kids are receiving in the way of services, but also what they are failing to receive. New Futures needs to find ways, both anecdotal and through a case management information system, to inform the Collaborative about gaps in the community's service delivery system.

The Role of the Case Manager in Case Planning: As in the assessment function, the New Futures case manager can perform a vital service by:

- **serving to pull together the case plans of other agencies into a single, comprehensive case plan.** Hopefully, this is then viewed by service providers as a sort of "master plan".

The creation of this "master plan", if it involves the agencies that need to be involved, can be viewed as a contract between a child and the city in which he/she lives. It becomes, if it is truly comprehensive, a statement not just about one agency's commitment to a child, but about the community's commitment to the child.

The plan should viewed as a contract, specifying the goals as well as the commitments of the child, parents, agencies, and New Futures to do certain things in certain ways by certain dates. Later, if the plan is not successful, it is useful to review how well or poorly the participants carried out their parts of the bargain.

- **keeping the various actors aware of changes in portions of the case plan.** For example, do other agencies know that the mental health agency is no longer doing such and such for Johnny?

- **identifying gaps in the plan.** For example, we are addressing three things but one other seems to be missing.

- **convening the actors,** including the child and parents, and **seeking to create a consensus** around the plan.

- **serving as a bridge** between the school system and all the other community service agencies. This bridge rarely exists in most communities.

- **bringing into the case plan elements that rarely appear in a case plan.** For example, through the planning coordination of the case manager, the child will be attending an after school or recreational center program and shooting baskets twice a week, or she is going to do some reading about computers since she has some career aspirations in that direction, or he is going to save some of what he earns on his part time job.

As with the assessment function, there must be collaboration and coordination among service providers and agencies if the New Futures case manager is to be able to perform the above case planning tasks.

3. Linking

Linking is the process by which the plan becomes real. As the word implies, it involves building connections between the child and the agency and among agencies. At its best linking is more than just getting a child the services that happen to be around. Done well, linking is getting the child the services that he/she needs.

Linking is not the same as "referring". When a referral is made, often the client is left in the hands of the agency and may not get the

service that was intended or desired. "Linking" implies forging a strong, effective connection between child and agency.

Linking is also not the same as "brokering", or at least it has different connotations. Brokering implies a wheeling and dealing process which makes deals on behalf of a child and which "works the system" on behalf of the child. We have no doubt that New Futures case managers will broker on behalf of kids because they should and sometimes must. But we strongly encourage a system wherein the "deals" are not made on an ad hoc, child by child basis. Every time that a New Futures case manager has to broker, has to work the system, or has to call in a favor for a kid, New Futures officials should recognize the need for a discussion among agencies.

Case managers may have to be trail blazers, but they should not have to blaze the same trails over and over again. New Futures officials, with the active support of the Collaborative, need to form the linkages that will allow comprehensive service delivery to flourish.

The Role of the Case Manager in Linking: In the best of situations New Futures case managers are doing both assessments and case plans hand in hand with representatives of the agencies that will carry out those plans. Under such a model, the function of linking is a fairly simple one. Representatives from one service agency quite naturally support the assessment and the case plan because they had played a part in its development. The move to linking -- the carrying out of that plan -- is a smooth and natural transition in this ideal model.

More often, however, the assessment and case plan will not involve all of the participating service agencies. In this instance the New Futures case manager must bring in the service agency and help the child to access needed services.

The linking process will undoubtedly take on many forms. In some instances, particularly when the service need is not complex and inter-agency agreements exist and work well, linkage may be largely a paper process. One New Futures city, for example, has a promise of state funds for child day care. Unless the child in question has unusual needs, it is likely that the linkage that is needed will take the form of a voucher --

backed, presumably, by some agreed upon record keeping system. But in most instances the service delivery agency, like the day care center, will have little need to fully understand the results of an assessment or of a full case plan.

Providing day care for the child of a high school student does not require detailed knowledge of the student's academic progress. On the other hand, a case plan calling for a community agency to provide drug treatment may require a full discussion of the student's background, an understanding of all the facets of the case plan, and a detailed "who is going to do what" discussion.

These examples are pointed out because we do not want to encourage collaboration for its own sake. It is hoped that the New Futures case management system will be inclusive and collaborative, but within reason. Case staffings and sharing of information are sometimes vitally important, but there is a virtue in simplicity as well. We do not want community agencies to see a "New Futures case" as one which necessarily is bogged down in endless meetings and procedures. Reaching this balance between simplicity and inclusiveness will take time, but the process will be greatly aided by honest discussion among agencies.

4. Monitoring

Monitoring is the process in which the case manager verifies that the case plan is being properly carried out and to what effect. As with linking there will be instances in which the monitoring function is fairly simple, a yes or no question about the delivery of a non-complex service. Is the child in day care? Yet, even in the simplest of examples, the question of "to what effect" can be difficult. Yes, the child is in day care, but what effect is that having on the mother's school attendance and school performance? We thought that day care would begin to "solve" the problem, but has it?

Monitoring can be seen as having three levels of inquiry:

1. The factual yes or no questions -- is the service being received? (Followed by the more difficult question of why not?)

2. **Is the service proving to have the desired result?** i.e. has the provision of day care improved school attendance? Has the provision of tutoring improved class performance?

3. **Does the service seem to be sufficient?** Now that we have begun to clear up the problem that we sought initially to address, what other needs have we uncovered? The tutor suspects that the child is learning disabled and the day care center sees a need for parenting classes.

Monitoring leads inevitably to either a conclusion that the plan is sound, or that it needs modification. In a very real sense the conclusions reached through monitoring bring the service delivery process back through a modification loop: was the assessment sound or did we miss something? How does the initial case plan look now, given our experience? Were the linkages firm? Did we call upon the right program or agency?

No one should be surprised when a case plan fails to correct all that is wrong in the world. Kids, their families, even professionals need to be reminded that human service is less than an exact science, and that the initial case plan involves merely "trying out some things". Monitoring allows the case plan to be modified.

The Role of the Case Manager in Monitoring: The New Futures case manager should seek to:

- **keep the child, family, and agencies focused on the goals of the case plan.**

The New Futures case manager must work to keep everyone focused on the agreed upon plan. This does not mean that the plan cannot be changed when new problems come to light; it merely points to the importance of keeping all involved parties focused on the goals of the case plan.

- o **make clear that the plan will be monitored, how it will be monitored, and how the participants reach conclusions about progress.**

It is important that the case manager not set him/herself up as the sole judge of how well or poorly things are going. All participants, most notably the child, need to have a role in reaching these conclusions.

Often, in a collaborative service delivery effort, case "staffings" are a critical means by which progress or the lack of progress is reviewed. While it is probably impractical to establish this kind of structure for all kids, it is a valuable process for the most complex cases. The child and family should be present at these meetings and encouraged to take an active role.

- o as with case planning, **develop a system wherein the aggregate results of "monitoring" are useful in informing the Collaborative.**

- o in discussions with participating agencies, **develop a process for informing the relevant agencies of any problems noted in service delivery.**

When problems appear to exist within an agency, New Futures management should seek first to work out the difficulties, agency to agency. Only those problems which cannot be effectively dealt with in this way, should be brought to higher levels.

5. Advocacy

Advocacy differs from other case management functions in that it is not always made up of a set of specific activities. Rather, advocacy is an attitude, a philosophy, and a way of approaching service to kids that runs through all of the other functions.

A case manager is an advocate when he/she includes the child and family in the case management process. A case manager is an advocate when he/she is documenting both an ideal case plan and a more immediate one. A case manager is an advocate when informing the Collaborative of system needs.

Advocacy sounds easy and everyone serving kids says that he/she does it. In fact, it is extremely difficult, particularly when attempting simultaneously to forge good working relationships with established agencies and institutions.

New Futures cities have done a fine job in selecting case managers who blend experience with enthusiasm. The Foundation's observation is that the first generation of New Futures case managers represents a remarkable cadre of professionals who have a wide variety of professional training and experience, are racially and culturally diverse, and seem universally to share a deep commitment to helping at-risk kids. The challenge to New Futures management is to harness that enthusiasm and commitment and channel it into effective advocacy.

The key is balance. Somewhere in between rabidly and loudly charging that all school officials are anti-child or anti- a particular child, and meekly whispering that a child may perhaps not be getting quite enough academic attention, lies effective advocacy.

There are perhaps no solid rules on "doing" advocacy. To some extent it is an art as opposed to a science. But a few words to the already wise may be in order:

- Case managers need to **THINK** about how to advocate in a particular situation. Is this one where I kick it to the administration? Might I better speak directly to the teacher involved? Do I really understand the eligibility rules that I think are being misapplied?

- Case managers should know what they want to achieve, as specifically as possible. It is far more effective to take the position that a child should receive tutoring in a specific

subject than it is to complain that he is not learning. And more effective yet to know where the tutoring can be had, at what cost, and whether the child is eligible.

- Supervision can be extremely helpful in developing an advocacy strategy. Case managers, like all service providers who care, can get too close to a situation and may find it valuable to bounce a situation off a supervisor. The supervisor may be familiar with a similar case that was handled effectively in another school, or may know of recent policy changes that affect the situation.

- It does not help to take the "good guy" role -- to posture about one's level of concern for kids versus a supposed adversary. In fact it rarely helps, in all but extreme situations, to be adversarial. Perhaps the most effective advocacy happens when the other parties do not even know that a case manager is wearing an advocate's hat.

- Individual case advocacy must be aggregated if institutional change is to occur. Waivers of policy, exceptions made in a single case, or calling in a favor may help one particular child, but they do not create lasting change for large numbers of children.

At the management level, New Futures executives can help smooth the way for advocacy by being clear in discussions with administrators of other agencies. "There will be times when we will disagree on how best to handle a child. How would you like us to deal with that?" It will help New Futures case managers in the field if the agencies and organizations that they work with are not surprised when case managers play an advocacy role. Advocacy needs to be viewed as part of what New Futures officials hire case managers to do, not as the personal crusade of an obnoxious case manager. Finally, an often overlooked part of the

advocacy function starts right at the beginning of working with a youth: the development of a relationship.

Case managers need to work with and advocate for youth and their families in ways that tend to build youth and family capacity to become better advocates for themselves. Including the youth/family at every step in the decision making process described above contributes to a relationship that, while supportive, does not create debilitating dependency.

A New Futures case manager is not a parent, not a pal, and not a knight in shining armor to a kid. If at-risk youth share a common trait it is that they are often disconnected from adults -- from their parents, teachers, and adult role models in the community -- and are distrustful of the motives and credibility of those who say that they have come to help. New Futures case managers need to try to overcome the expected resistance that they will encounter with at least some youth.

New Futures management can make the development of effective working relationships between case managers and kids more likely to happen in the following ways:

- by keeping caseloads manageable;
- by allowing flexible hours so that kids can be seen in non-traditional working hours;
- by supporting advocacy for at-risk kids;
- by hiring staff who are comfortable with adolescents and who may even like them; and
- by structuring a system that keeps kids and specific case managers together over time.

Ultimately, though, the development of relationships (unlike policy changes or resource allocation) falls to the case managers themselves.

We hope that New Futures gives case managers the opportunity to be creative, to be non-bureaucratic, to relax and to enjoy the kids they are working with. Effective advocacy and effective case management demand that the case manager really **knows** the client. It demands as well that the client can invest enough trust in the case manager to share his/her thoughts, dreams, and aggravations. Without open and honest communication, little that the case managers do will really help at-risk kids.

IV. Organizational Relationships

As noted above, case managers' duties can be truly effective only in a system which is prepared to receive them. The development of inter-agency relationships in support of case management is, therefore, critical.

In every community's service delivery system there are both formal and informal ways of working. Historically the best social service, health, education, and other staff have found ways to communicate with their counterparts in other agencies to the benefit of kids. Someone at the child welfare agency works with a teacher at the junior high on behalf of a family and they get along well, and next time they call faster and work better. Or someone knows someone high up in an organization who owes them a favor and can get a policy waived.

The informal network works sometimes. It works when the best staff have the time or take the time to swim upstream in order to get something done. It works when personalities click. It works for the veterans who know how to work it. But most of the time, it does not work at all.

New Futures seeks to establish a system where inter-agency collaboration is the norm. It sees a system where staff are **expected** to cooperate across agency lines and are called to task if they do not. It sees a system where six or eight assessments on an individual child, all sitting unshared in separate file cabinets, never synthesized into a comprehensive assessment, are unthinkable.

Case managers cannot wheel and deal to create this system. On their own they can at best only replicate the informal system, sometimes, on behalf of kids. It falls to the New Futures Collaborative, its managers, and the managers of all child serving agencies to create the environment and the **procedures** necessary to support and, indeed, to require collaboration and coordination.

Developing an integrated case management process will not be easy. Nonetheless, there really is no acceptable second choice. If agencies in New Futures cities continue the practice of independent decision making and planning around at-risk youth, then New Futures will surely fail.

Among the most critical organizational relationships is the one between New Futures and the school system. With respect to case management, the relationship issues seem to occur most often at the individual school level.

The Foundation believes that, to be effective, New Futures case managers need to be **intimately involved with, but administratively independent of,** the existing service delivery system. New Futures cities have adopted this belief and, in a variety of ways, have created organizational structures which ensure this independence. At the same time most New Futures case managers are housed in school buildings, at least on a part time basis.

The presence of independent staff located **within** an organization creates understandable pressures and stresses. School principals are charged with the responsibility of assuring an orderly education process within their buildings and have a legitimate role to play in seeing that the presence of non-school personnel does not become a problem. New Futures staff and management need to be sensitive to the reaction(s) to their presence, both positive and negative.

New Futures staff in the schools are, in a sense, invited guests. (Although, often, the invitation came not from the building principal but rather from school district administration.) The staff need to know and understand the rules and procedures that govern the building and to follow them. If serious difficulties arise, they ought most often be resolved at administrative levels.

The Foundation's sense is that, despite some rocky starts, relationships in most school settings across the cities seem now to be on the right track. Case managers are performing roles appropriate for their positions, and are beginning to positively impact the lives of at-risk youth. They have not fallen into the trap of performing other (undoubtedly needed) duties, but rather have held steadfastly to the duties that they were hired to perform and for which the Foundation has provided funding.

V. Development and Implementation

In developing a collaborative case management system, we recommend that the following planning steps be taken:

- **Identify those agencies most likely to be involved with the New Futures target population.** Likely the lists will not differ much from city to city and will include: schools, the child welfare agency, the mental health agency, the juvenile court, the public health agency, and others.

- Of those, **establish priorities**: which agencies are most likely to conduct assessments of New Futures kids? Which are most likely to have case plans in place? Which have shown the most positive interest in New Futures? Which would seem to be most receptive to the notion of a cooperative venture?

- Across agencies, **identify barriers to conducting joint assessments, developing joint case plans, and delivering coordinated services.** For example, what are the legal barriers to sharing information?

Once having a good sense of the above, the next step would be to attempt to establish a dialogue with priority agencies around assessment procedures, case planning practices, and on-going service delivery.

The Content of Discussions: While the specific content of the discussions will vary from city to city and from agency to agency, some common threads will nearly always be present:

o **Assessment**

How can we pool our information and impressions of a child for our common interest of helping this child/family? How do we handle confidentiality of information and parental consent? What is the content of your assessment process? Of ours? How will we know when we are both serving the same kid? Can we sit in on your staffings for a child we are working with also? If we are working with a kid and you are not, how can we utilize your assessment capacity?

In some instances the issue may not be sharing assessment data but getting one done. New Futures should identify likely sources of assessment that the case managers can call upon to conduct an assessment in areas where one has not been done. To whom can the case manager turn for a physical exam? A psychological exam? How much if anything will it cost and how can it be paid for? How long is the waiting period?

o **Case Planning**

Several content issues are particular to case planning:

Frequency and description of services to be offered: Many agencies either do not have case plans at all, or have case plans that are so imprecise that they defy effective monitoring. Cases are "assigned" to an individual who "handles" the case. New Futures should press for specificity in case plans, i.e. who is going to do what and with what frequency?

Eligibility and waiting lists: New Futures has a need, for planning and for advocacy purposes, to document not only what services a child receives but what services the child fails to receive. This process (discussed more fully under Advocacy) if handled poorly, can place New Futures staff in the position of appearing to sandbag the very agencies with whom they are seeking to collaborate.

Professional language barriers: Agencies describe services with terms that often have meanings which are more or less than a plain English definition might convey. Words such as "counseling", "mentoring", and "supervision" may convey very different things to representatives of separate systems. An effort should be made on an ongoing basis to develop a common language.

Inclusiveness: Very often, even with the best of intentions, someone is excluded. For example, a meeting to assess a child heads in an unexpected direction and leads to a planning discussion that concludes that service X is needed. The provider of service X is not in the room. Either they were not invited (this service need was not foreseen) or the agency representative could not make it or they do not yet have an agreement to participate in common planning.

New Futures may want to develop practices which support a preliminary planning level, i.e., "it looks to us like service X would help but we need to check it out further." New Futures wants to avoid either alienating the non-attending agency by seeming to make commitments on their behalf or, even worse, leaving service X out of the plan because no one present can guarantee it.

Already Active Cases: Often the New Futures kid will be on someone else's existing caseload. As difficult as it is to engineer a multi-agency case plan with a new case, it is doubly so when a case plan (or plans) already exist. Agreements should be reached with agencies around:

1. how those agencies can get a kid into the New Futures case management system;

2. who should be referred, i.e. what are the characteristics of the target population?;

3. when referrals should be made -- probably as early as possible, before separate agency case plans are fixed; and

4. how New Futures will handle the referrals of others -- if we want priority status from other agencies in some cases, are we willing to give them that status in our program?

o **Linking**

The New Futures case manager, particularly in the linking process, needs to walk a careful line between being an advocate and being obnoxious. New Futures case managers and the management of New Futures need to be sensitive to both the realities of other agencies and to the feelings of their professional staff. Waiting lists are in some instances a reality beyond the control of agency staff and administration.

New Futures staff need to resist the temptation of seeing themselves as the good guys -- the ones that are really trying to help kids -- in a world of bad guys. Not only is a good guy-bad guy view of the world naive and inaccurate, it also creates understandable resentment.

Specifically, the New Futures case management system should seek to:

1. develop agreements which make linkage a smooth, understandable process and which avoid having to make them up from scratch each time;

2. share information which is needed by the service delivery agency in order to be most effective;

3. get specific service commitments -- not only that the agency will "open a case" but also what will be done, when, how often, and by whom;

4. reach understandings with community agencies on cases in general and on specific cases as to how New Futures and the agency will remain in contact, i.e. who will share what information, when, and in what form (written, telephone, meeting); and

5. do the above in ways that minimize the feeling of being invaded, dictated to, or not respected, on the part of service agency personnel.

Other Thoughts on Inter-Agency Agreements: It is important that the New Futures agency go through the probably tedious experience of successfully negotiating inter-agency agreements -- important that it not be left solely to the ad hoc efforts of individual case managers on behalf of individual kids. The first such agreement may be the hardest. Later efforts will build on the model of the first and, given sufficient positive exposure before the Collaborative, the negotiation of the first agreement may spur others to want one as well.

In developing a single, comprehensive assessment and case plan, New Futures invades previously private areas of agency functioning. Throughout the case management process, questions of special expertise will be raised as a counter to group decision making. "Generalist versus Specialist" arguments seem to be an inevitable part of any case management effort. Usually these chicken and egg debates are a smoke screen which attempts to cover up a genuine desire to protect turf. New Futures should acknowledge the critical role of specialists while arguing as well for a more comprehensive, holistic approach. Give the specialists their due, and move on. Agencies unaccustomed to speaking frankly before clients will be asked to do so not only in front of clients but in front of other agencies as well, and they may be resistant.

As a general proposition New Futures should seek to join in an effort to serve an at-risk kid as soon as possible and to limit the number of kids being served in isolation from New Futures. Yet, in reality, the numbers of at-risk kids far exceeds any city's capacity to be deeply involved with them. Discussions with other agencies should focus on priorities -- which kids would most benefit from our mutual involvement?

Finally, New Futures needs to think about how, when and if it might play a secondary case management role. In a hypothetical case a mental health worker is deeply involved with a child, has been for some time, and has a good relationship with the child and family. Yet the mental health worker, in most instances, will be a therapist and not a "broker". How can New Futures and the mental health agency pool their

resources -- leave intact that which is going well and add to it the New Futures ability to access other resources and to coordinate community efforts?

This question, and its resolution over time, will have considerable impact on the manpower and resource needs of New Futures. A system might be developed in which New Futures case managers have primary and secondary responsibility, i.e. where they play either a lead or a supportive role.

Benchmarks: Self evaluation by cities is vital to effective organizational planning. The city has to know what to look at in order to know how far or how close it is to where it wants to be.

In helping to establish benchmarks, we offer a number of broad questions and issues below. Although divided into the now familiar functions, the city of course needs to continually evaluate its progress in the case management system as a whole.

- In **Assessment** the critical issues may be:

  1. the extent to which the New Futures case management agency and others are sharing assessment information and the nature of that sharing -- is it simply a series of mailings of assessment forms to each other or is it a process which seeks to reach a common assessment? ;

  2. level of agreement -- which agencies have agreed to a collaborative assessment process and which have not?; For those who have not agreed, is it:

     a) there does not seem to be a large enough caseload in common to justify such an agreement?

     b) timing: negotiations have not begun or been completed but it is on the schedule? and/or

c) the agency has refused, or is stonewalling? In this case, what is the New Futures agency doing or what is its strategy to bring this agency into a collaborative agreement? ;

3. roles -- which of the roles identified earlier does the New Futures case manager appear to be playing in the assessment process? ; and

4. view of collaboration -- how do the staff at other agencies view the collaboration with New Futures, i.e. are they complying because someone made a deal or because they find it helpful or both?

o In **Case Planning** the critical issues may be:

1. the extent to which case plans actually in use in New Futures cities represent the plans of multiple agencies and the extent to which those plans were developed in a joint or multiple agency collaboration;

2. the extent to which kids and their families actively participate in the development of case plans;

3. the extent to which participating agencies keep each other abreast of changes in the case plan;

4. the extent to which a mechanism exists that captures the weaknesses in case plans that are due to service unavailability; and the extent to which this information is available to and used by the Collaborative.

o In **Linking** the critical issues may be:

1. the extent to which linkage is achieved through inter-agency agreements as opposed to ad-hoc brokering;

2. the extent to which the linkage is a firm and specific commitment to service delivery, as opposed to the mere acceptance of a referral;

3. the extent to which agencies receiving referrals commit not only to doing their specific part, but commit to the larger case plan and its goals;

4. the burden that linkage with New Futures places on the service agency, i.e. how much paper, how many meetings, etc., in relation to what New Futures gives back; and

5. the extent to which New Futures staff develop respectful, collegial relationships with the staff of other agencies, without compromising their advocacy role.

o In **Monitoring** the critical issues may be:

1. the extent to which other agencies expect and accept New Futures case managers in a monitoring role. Monitoring a case plan's implementation cannot be effectively done if it is akin to espionage. It has to be an above board process;

2. the impact of monitoring -- Does it result in case plan changes? Is there a method by which the information gained in monitoring is fed back and used?;

3. feelings of the kids and parents -- are their views about progress seen as critical information in the monitoring process? ; and

4. results -- are the results of monitoring aggregated in a useful form for the Collaborative and other policy makers?

- In **Advocacy** the critical issues may be:

  1. balance -- Are the case managers able to walk the thin lines between firm advocacy and alienating the agencies with which they work? ;
  2. policy -- is advocacy carried on only on a child by child basis or do the issues raised in individual cases form a policy and change agenda for New Futures? ;

  3. strategy -- is the advocacy function performed in a planned, strategic way or is it reactive? ; and

  4. acceptance -- is the advocacy role understood and accepted in the community at large?

VI. Activities for the Second Year

New Futures cities vary widely in terms of where they are in the implementation of their systems. In some cities, discussion continues on the model. In others there clearly are insufficient resources identified to go much beyond first year implementation, and often the level of first year activity is seen as insufficient. Some cities have chosen to target certain students rather tightly -- to some extent a resource driven decision -- while others hope to serve all students.

Activities for the second year of New Futures need to be driven by a candid assessment of first year accomplishments and a clear understanding of five year goals. By reviewing where they are now, and holding that up against where they hope to go, cities can make the mid-course corrections necessary to achieve success.

While it is difficult to recommend second year planning and implementation activities that are relevant for all New Futures cities, some key activities stand out and are, in fact, relevant across the board:

- All New Futures cities need to have clearer expansion plans for case management beyond the first year target population. This includes both expansion in the sense of picking up a next generation of kids while continuing to work with the first generation as well as expansion in the sense of movement beyond pilot schools or neighborhoods. The staffing, funding, and implementation issues can, we believe, be more fully appreciated and dealt with now than they could a year ago.

- Each city needs to review and understand the interrelationship between targeting, expansion, resources, and caseload size. New Futures asks for an intense and long lasting relationship between case manager and child -- one that cannot be expected to be effective if caseloads prohibit meaningful interaction with kids.

- All New Futures cities should develop methods by which the case management system can inform the Collaborative on their experience in working with at-risk youth and on the service needs of their communities.

- In all New Futures cities increased attention needs to be paid to developing and installing detailed inter-agency agreements with key youth serving agencies: the schools, health and social service agencies, youth employment programs, and others.

- All New Futures cities need to review and revise if necessary their initial decisions regarding targeting of at-risk youth. In this review particular attention should be paid to: youth who move from a "New Futures school" to another school, youth who drop out or are dropped out of school, and the surprising numbers of over-age students that have been encountered i.e. 16 year old 7th graders.

These five critical issues should, we believe, frame the agenda for second year case management planning in all cities, and will inevitably be coupled in each city with planning issues which may be more local in nature. The results of this planning effort should be clearly stated, and the goals to which the New Futures program commits itself should be publicly visible.

VII. Technical Assistance Plans

Technical assistance on case management issues will focus on several levels of the system, and will be delivered in several ways:

- At the direct service level, Foundation staff will continue to provide training as requested for line case managers focusing on the case management process, relationship building, navigating through the system, and the New Futures vision. The New Futures Institute is currently working to summarize and analyze the results of staff orientation of the first generation of New Futures case managers and will be feeding this information back to the cities. In addition, we are exploring the feasibility of multi-city approaches to the training of New Futures case managers -- cross city training experiences as well as multi-city training events or conferences.

- For management, technical assistance will be focused primarily on New Futures Executives, Case Management Directors, Collaborative members, and administrators of other service delivery organizations. Particular emphasis will be on the inter-agency agreement process. Technical assistance at this level will be more of the character of "working with" New Futures staff and others, on-site in the New Futures cities, than it will be stand-up "training".

  Also at the management level, technical assistance will take the form of working with New Futures management around the kinds of issues identified under second year plans. Again, the style will be more hands on than academic.

- With case management directors, we will continue the process of facilitating meetings across cities. In a very real way we believe that New Futures cities can learn more from each other than from the Foundation.

VIII. Conclusion

We see a great deal of movement and progress in the development of case management systems in the New Futures cities. In four of the five cities case managers have been selected, very good staff seem to have been chosen, the staff have been trained and are in place. This is no small accomplishment for the very few months in which New Futures has been operational.

It can be generally observed, however, that in many ways New Futures case managers are now operating in a world that is not quite ready for them, that does not truly understand who they are and/or why they are there.

In some instances the plans for case management in the cities' original submission to the Foundation have proven to be flawed. In some instances the resources allocated to case management are insufficient to meet case management goals. In others the structure of the case management system and its relation to schools and others was either not fully thought out or was ambiguous.

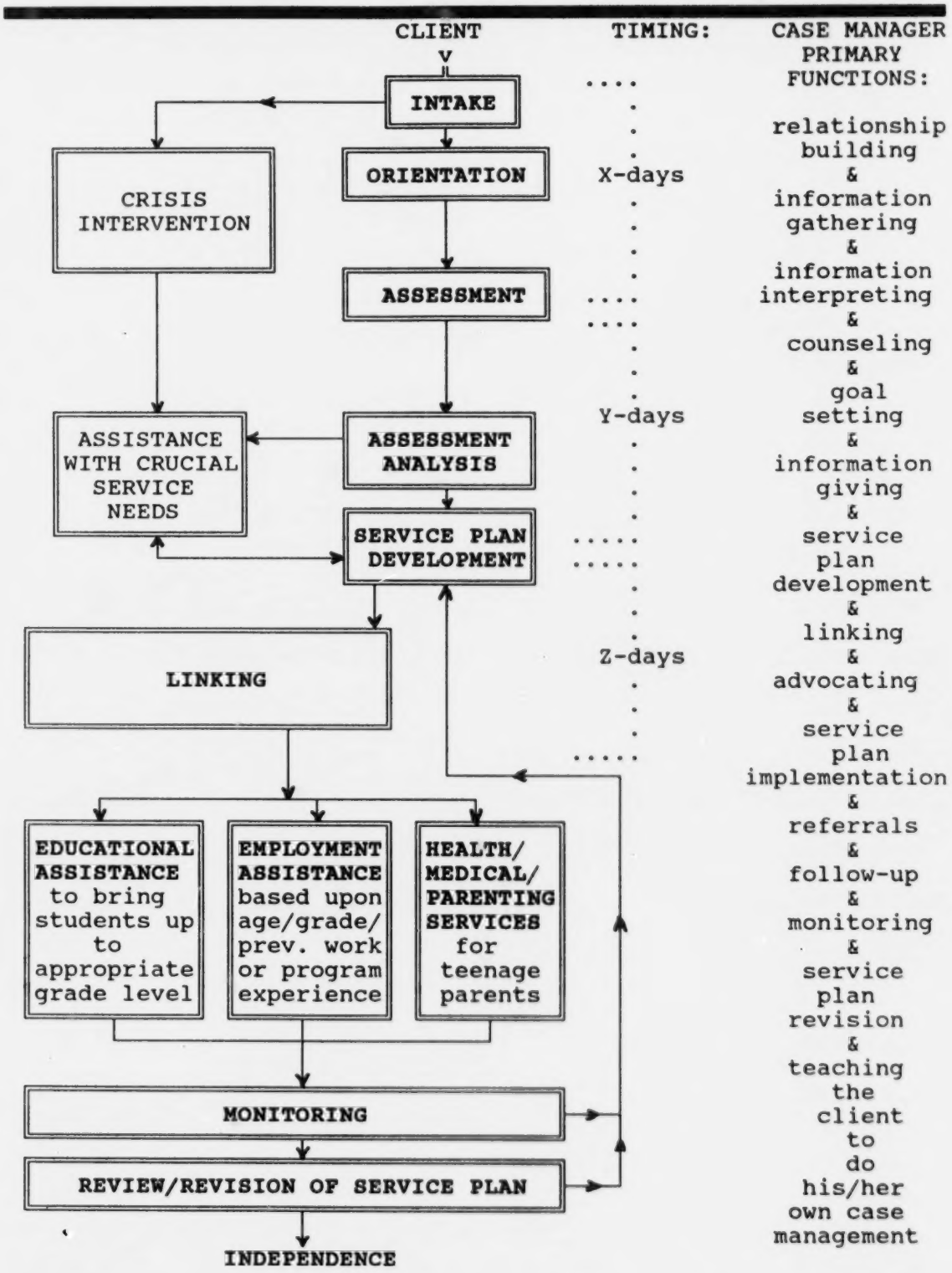
All of the above was to be expected. New Futures asks for an extremely comprehensive case management effort, with a target population that is difficult to serve, involving providers of service not used to working collaboratively. No one said it was going to be easy.

The greatest danger, in our view, is that the case management effort will be compromised. There are many good reasons to compromise: kids need service right now that cannot wait until the model is pure, agency relationships need to be built up (and if people really understood New Futures it might scare them), and we need to show results. The Foundation encourages New Futures cities to keep working with kids, to broker when you have to, and to continue to let case managers loose to help kids. From what we see and hear, kids are being helped. But while doing the day to day work, New Futures management needs to keep the vision before them and to work conscientiously and strategically towards forging the model system.

To do otherwise, as we have noted, will be merely to add another "layer" onto an already layered system. And layering, we believe, will not

get the job done. The Foundation takes the promise of partnership seriously. Most recently we have begun to meet with the case management directors in the New Futures cities as a group. We are encouraged that this process, in addition to other methods such as on-site visits, will help us to better understand the cities' needs so that we may be more helpful.

CASE MANAGER'S FUNCTIONS IN A SAMPLE BASIC CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM


CLIENT
TIMING:
CASE MANAGER PRIMARY FUNCTIONS:
INTAKE
ORIENTATION
X-days
CRISIS INTERVENTION
ASSESSMENT
ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS
ASSISTANCE WITH CRUCIAL SERVICE NEEDS
Y-days
SERVICE PLAN DEVELOPMENT
LINKING
Z-days
EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE to bring students up to appropriate grade level
EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE based upon age/grade/ prev. work or program experience
HEALTH/ MEDICAL/ PARENTING SERVICES for teenage parents
MONITORING
REVIEW/REVISION OF SERVICE PLAN
INDEPENDENCE
relationship building & information gathering & information interpreting & counseling & goal setting & information giving & service plan development & linking & advocating & service plan implementation & referrals & follow-up & monitoring & service plan revision & teaching the client to do his/her own case management

EDUCATION

I. Overview

In previous sections of the Implementation Guide, we described New Futures as an initiative that creates new citywide systems that enhance the ability of all youth to become successful, productive adults. New Futures envisions institutions working together to create a powerful community commitment to help young people reach their potential and escape from the poverty and frustrations that so often constrict their dreams.

But New Futures also seeks change within institutions as well. It is a vehicle for reviewing and revamping practices and policies that have not previously worked well with our young people. New Futures is based on the premise that it is not enough that institutions simply become stronger collaborators. It is also necessary that each institution become stronger and better at working with youth and that organizations look deep inside themselves and make the changes necessary to increase their effectiveness with young people.

Because school systems are by far the largest youth-serving institution in any city and contribute substantially to children's success or failure, they must be full partners in this approach to institutional change. If New Futures is to succeed, schools need to collaborate effectively with a range of organizations that can bring the full array of a city's resources to bear on youth problems. And while it is critical that schools collaborate with other institutions, it is equally critical that they, as individual institutions, become as strong as possible. **New Futures cities**

must engage in a long term process that will enhance entire schools and maximize their effectiveness for all students – not just those immediately identified as at-risk.

Schools must believe in their ability to insure that every student succeeds in learning the basic skills needed for a productive adulthood. **The Foundation believes that if schools are to truly become more effective, they must use the range of resources available in their community; combine positive climates and strong educational components with youth employment and pregnancy prevention initiatives; and they must bind these components together with the support offered through case management. This development is critical, for effective schools are the best form of effective dropout prevention.**

Current Initiatives: Not surprisingly, school systems have been central to the initial New Futures planning. Looking across the five cities we now find examples of special clustering projects, specialized remedial labs, newly created specialized curricula and a host of after school activities.

All of these activities are important starting points for New Futures schools. In every city, current activities are helping at-risk youth, promulgating New Futures' message, creating momentum, generating excitement and, we hope, establishing a sense that New Futures is a credible initiative in which school personnel and students can feel confident.

Notwithstanding this good start, the Foundation believes that all New Futures cities need to greatly expand their vision of New Futures educational initiatives. Current initiatives can be characterized, almost without exception, as "add-on" programs. For the most part, they have been designed to serve only specialized and relatively small groups of at-risk students. To date, no city appears to have exploited the full potential of New Futures as a tool for school-wide reform that touches all students.

The danger in relying only on current strategies is that even the most efficient and exciting add-on programs will not make a sizeable

difference in dropout or achievement rates in New Futures cities. The baseline evaluation report recently developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, confirms, for example, that large numbers of students in all five New Futures cities are failing to meet their own system's standards for academic performance, achievement or behavior. Given the size and importance of this problem, a strategy which relies on adding a few remedial education labs or which organizes a "cluster" or which extends the school day by an hour will not, in the long run, make the kinds of changes necessary to address the complex educational deficiencies that face large numbers of students in New Futures schools.

At the same time, the complexity of these problems requires intricate approaches -- approaches that are comprehensive and creative yet still have a connection to concrete problems. For example, it is not likely that widescale school failure rates will be addressed through after school enrichment programs alone; nor will remediation initiatives effectively help schools address inordinate suspension rates. However, this does not mean that such initiatives cannot play a part in dealing with these issues -- rather, it means that they can not be the only solutions. Put more simply, there are no simple fixes for the issues that New Futures schools face.

The problems that students bring to school and the difficulties which schools address in educating students are so complex that they cannot be addressed by one program or a set of programs that affects only a handful of students. Instead, it is important that schools realize that their current initiatives are only a first step in meeting these complex needs and that viable solutions can only come with sustained thought and reflection. New Futures requires an iterative process -- not a one-step solution.

In sum, the Foundation believes that New Futures can succeed only if schools are willing to use this opportunity to expand their thinking beyond the current add-on orientation and engage in basic and fundamental changes around issues that affect how they teach and support all students.

II. Foundation Expectations

If schools are to truly make a difference in reducing dropout rates and increasing academic achievement of all students, then they must explore making fundamental changes in a number of important areas that relate to the climate schools promulgate for students, teachers and the community; the curricula they teach and the way that they teach it; the school's structure and organization; and the policies which govern them. The Foundation envisions that in five years, each New Futures school will have examined and made substantive changes in all of these areas and that these changes will help students to develop the skills and self-confidence that they will need to become productive adults. Specifically, we hold the following expectations:

School Climate: New Futures schools will demonstrate a more positive climate for learning. This will require changes in how schools relate to students, staff and parents.

Students in New Futures schools will feel a greater sense of belonging and attachment to their school. They will believe that in their school:

- adults want students to achieve and hold high academic and behavioral standards for them;
- they are treated consistently and fairly in relation to discipline;
- there are goals for which they should strive, there are incremental steps that they should meet to attain these goals, and there are valued and meaningful incentives to help them do so;

- there are specific adults to whom they can go and receive help with both academic and personal issues; and

- adults respect them for who they are and treat them with dignity.

Staff – teachers, administrators and others -- will view New Futures schools as more positive places in which to work. They will believe that their schools offer them:

- sufficient autonomy to carry out their responsibilities and every available opportunity to perform their best work;

- opportunities to make decisions and have input into decisions that are critical to their work, including curriculum, methods of instruction, discipline policies and scheduling;

- support in their work. By this, we mean that they will have necessary resources and supplies, ample planning time, access to support personnel, and opportunities to communicate and work collaboratively with colleagues;

- a clear mission and direction. Teachers will believe that they are working toward a set of common goals concerning children's education; and

- a role in on-going planning and evaluation of the school's performance with respect to students.

Parents of children in New Futures schools will feel that they are full partners in the education of their children. They will believe that:

- they are welcome in their child's school, their involvement is valued by teachers and principals, and that there are

mechanisms that allow them substantial input into their child's education;

- o they have a say in and support the mission and goals of the school;

- o there are a variety of different opportunities to participate in regarding their child's education both at home and at school; and

- o there are considerable resources and support from the school and community, including education and training that will help them to be more effective partners in their child's education.

Curriculum and Instruction: In five years, the Foundation expects that there will be substantive and significant changes in the way that curriculum and instruction are addressed in New Futures schools. Specifically:

- o Curricula offered -- both core and supplemental -- will be designed to address better not only students' academic needs, but also their developmental needs, cultural diversity, and interests;

- o Instructional diversity will be a characteristic of New Futures schools. Students in these schools will have opportunities to engage in a variety of learning activities which, like curricula, are responsive to their developmental characteristics, learning styles and academic and social needs; and

- o Development of higher order thinking skills will be a goal for all aspects of curriculum and instruction.

School Organization: The Foundation expects that New Futures schools will, over the course of the next five years, examine and make appropriate organizational changes to strengthen their ability to make schools positive and productive learning environments for students, school staff, and parents. Specifically, the Foundation expects that New Futures schools will:

- o Examine opportunities to reduce class size and the numbers of students for which teachers are responsible;

- o Provide opportunities for school staff to expand or change existing roles;

- o Provide mechanisms for parents to become full partners in their child's education; and

- o Explore scheduling options that afford more opportunities for instructional and curricular creativity: for example, out-of-school educational experiences for students and increased time for teachers to meet and plan with other teachers, parents, and support service personnel -- including case managers.

School Policies:

Discipline, Retention and Course Failure Policies: Although the Foundation expects that at the end of five years schools will have in place a series of viable alternatives to current policies which exclude, retain and fail large numbers of students, the seriousness of this issue cries out for immediate attention. Therefore, New Futures cities, in planning second year activities must bring together groups of school staff, parents, case managers and others to:

- o examine, in a systematic and thoughtful manner, the ways in which current policies affect the experiences of at-risk and potentially at-risk students; and

- o create viable alternatives that can serve the needs of the students, staff and school as a whole.

There is considerable evidence to support this expectation. Current evaluation data collected by the Center for the Study of Social Policy indicate that retention and suspension, for example, are commonly used practices in some New Futures cities. This is particularly true at the 7th to 9th grade level and in relation to students who are minority and male.

These data are even more troubling when we consider that formal research on at-risk youth and the collective experiences of practitioners leave us with two certainties:

- o one of the most consistent predictors of whether or not students drop out of school is retention in grade; and

- o students who drop out consistently have a history of school suspensions and academic failure.

Given this, it is clear that discipline, retention and failure policies are critical issues -- issues that will require not only immediate, but also sustained attention by schools and entire New Futures communities.

Parent Involvement Policies: Research also suggests that parental involvement is a key ingredient in the development of effective schools. When parents are involved in schools, children do better, and, on the whole schools become stronger. Given this, the Foundation expects that schools and parents will:

- o review the ways that existing parent involvement policies restrict or enhance parents ability to be full partners in their child's education; and

- develop a comprehensive parent involvement policy which provides the range of at-home and in-school activities necessary to meet the diverse needs of parents. For example, home-related opportunities might include developing parenting skills, making the home a better learning environment, and helping young people with educational activities. Opportunities at school might include involvement in academic and social activities and school-related advocacy and input into school policy decisions.

III. Development and Implementation

The Foundation does not believe that schools can immediately achieve all or even most of these educational expectations. However, while we recognize that the nature and magnitude of these changes will take time and commitment, we firmly believe that they are essential if New Futures is to succeed. Although difficult, they are not impossible to achieve, particularly if schools use the various community resources available under other New Futures components. These resources include, for example, the support and services available through pregnancy prevention, youth employment and the case management process; and the information provided through their MIS and evaluation data.

Additional assistance can and should come from state education agencies, particularly since their commitment to New futures cities was an important factor in the Foundation's award decision. For example, we expect that states will be open to policy waivers proposed by cities, offer cities additional resources, and allow them to use existing resources more creatively (e.g.: collapsed categorical funding).

Finally, schools should look to educational literature as a resource replete with numerous tools that can be used to make them more effective for staff, students, and parents. For example:

- **School based management/improvement and shared decision making** are vehicles to help increase the autonomy and participation of administrators, teachers, parents, and students in the school's operation. These programs increase the sense of ownership and commitment to the school by allowing for broader input on the assessment of and decisions about school climate, curriculum, instruction, organization, and policies. The design of such interventions must be well planned, well defined, and contain input from all affected groups.

- **Experiential education and inquiry based education** are techniques used by school districts to take advantage of different learning and teaching styles in the development of a student's higher order thinking skills.

- **Courses in negotiation strategies and conflict resolution** for teachers, students, and parents have shown promise as an alternative way of dealing with discipline issues and cutting down on suspensions. These techniques provide tools to students and teachers which enable them to more effectively control their environment and can be used as a positive way to link discipline with academic achievement.

- **Behavior modification practices** that focus on positive behaviors and use student contracts that offer meaningful incentives are particularly useful with students who show a propensity for discipline problems.

- **In-school suspension programs** that are part of a comprehensive approach to improving school climate and discipline, and which include both academic and social support for suspended students are also useful alternatives to traditional suspension practices.

- **Cluster programs or schools-within-schools** are powerful tools for reducing class size, integrating curricula, increasing student affiliation with individual teachers, and providing opportunities for using alternative and more creative instructional techniques. On-going support, training, and planning for participating staff are important to the successful design and implementation of these programs.

- **Flexible scheduling practices** that offer extended periods for instruction and have built-in planning time for teachers make it possible to offer a more integrated curriculum, more diverse instructional strategies, and greater opportunities for parent involvement.

- **Teacher based guidance initiatives** -- particularly when used by staff who have a firm grounding in the affective and developmental needs of students -- are another way of crossing traditional organizational roles of teaching and guidance staff. Again, staff support is an important element of this program.

Although these methodologies are highlighted as useful tools for reaching some of the outlined goals, they are offered here only as examples of ways to accomplish New Futures goals. The Foundation is committed to the belief that if schools are to reach their potential as effective institutions for all students, then strategies for doing so must come from those who work with students day in and day out: parents, teachers, administrators and other school personnel.

Lessons learned from school reform efforts indicate that neither the strategies espoused above -- nor any others, for that matter -- are likely to work if they are created in a vacuum, without the support and input of individuals who will be affected by them. Further, and just as important, no school-wide strategy is likely to succeed without some long range, on-going appraisal of what the school is like as a place to learn and work. Comprehensive strategies are, by definition, complex, and must be developed slowly, with a thorough understanding of how school characteristics might contribute to their successful implementation.

IV. Activities for the Second Year

The Foundation expects that schools involved in New Futures will continue and expand their current school-based initiatives and take appropriate steps to integrate other New Futures components into their activities. As indicated earlier, current activities are a strong and necessary start to the school-wide comprehensive approaches we expect to see in subsequent years.

Cities, in planning for their Second Year, will need to closely examine the progress of their initiatives, the needs that they have addressed, their strengths, and what changes might be made to improve student's success. **Second Year activities need not be limited by the original proposal submitted to the Foundation. Rather, they should be informed by cities' own perceptions of first year progress, information from evaluators, and advice from technical assistance and other Foundation staff. The Foundation feels strongly that cities should build second year program activities in light of first year successes and mistakes.**

However, while expansion and refinement are important, the Foundation also believes that **it is critical and necessary that New Futures schools, if they are to address the issues raised in this paper, need to initiate comprehensive school based appraisal and planning processes beginning in the 1989-1990 school year.**

A thoughtful appraisal process will provide the opportunity for individual and group reflection about the current environment and activities of the school. The process should allow for the participation of a wide range of constituent groups, including, but not limited to the Superintendent, members of the school board, members of the city's Oversight Collaborative, parents, principals and other administrators, regular and specialized teachers, students, teacher union representatives, counselors, human service providers, case managers, New Futures education liaisons, and representatives of the city's business community. Preferably, it should be driven and overseen in an organized fashion, by a school planning team comprised of representatives from these groups.

The intent of this assessment is to allow varied individuals to reflect on 1) their school's current ways of operating in relation to at-risk and other students and 2) areas that should change if they are to better serve all students. It is to serve as a foundation for further educational initiatives that schools undertake in New Futures.

Issues to be addressed in school-based appraisal: The issues that these assessment activities should address are difficult ones, and, in fact will probably engender some controversy. But the Foundation believes that their examination is critical if schools are to use the New Futures opportunity make real progress in the years to come. These issues include:

- **Perceptions toward the school**: How do those individuals who are most affected by schools view it? For example:

  Teachers: Do they believe that they have input into important educational issues and do they believe that their input is influential in regard to what happens at the school? Do they feel like professionals who are appreciated and supported in their work? And are there incentives in place that will motivate them to perform their best work? Do they collaborate, share perspectives and provide mutual support for each other? And what factors foster or impede such practices in New Futures schools? Finally, do they share a basic understanding of New Futures and how it relates to their work?

  Students: Do students feel that they are respected in their school? Do they know what is expected of them and are they challenged to excel? Is there a connection to and respect for the cultural differences that may exist between them and adults in the school? Do they feel that they are part of a supportive community that demonstrates patience and opportunities for growth? Is school an interesting place for them to learn?

Parents and Community: Do parents and others in the community (including case managers and the Oversight Collaborative) believe that the school welcomes and supports them as partners and taps their strengths? Do they believe that the school respects cultural differences and is responsive to the needs of a community's children? And are they confident in the school's ability to prepare students for the challenges they will face in the future?

- **Perceptions toward at-risk students:** What are individual and institutional perceptions of at-risk students? For example:

  Individuals: How do adults view the problems presented by at-risk students? Are they overwhelmed or do they feel that the school has a legitimate role to play in the lives of these students? Are teachers and others willing to change their teaching practices to better meet students' needs? Are adults willing to extend themselves to students outside of the classroom and do they have opportunities and incentives to do so? Do adults have goals and expectations for students? Do they have a vision of what they want them to know and value when they graduate?

  Institutions: How are at-risk youth perceived by institutions in the community such as the school system? Local businesses? What actions reflect these perceptions? Do the institutions feel that they have a legitimate role in the lives of at-risk youth? Do the institutions take an active role in addressing the problems, both academic and social, of students?

Individuals need to address their role in these areas, but there also needs to be a collective examination of the issues. Reflection on the school and its students needs to come not only from groups of teachers, administrators, and parents but also from groups comprised of the constituencies mentioned above.

Progress on any and all of these issues is likely to be affected by professionals' prior experience in school improvement and dropout prevention. In many schools, teachers have spent considerable time throughout their careers on improvement efforts that were planned but never implemented, or when implemented, never sustained over long periods of time. Such experiences may have left many individuals hesitant to examine further how schools can become better places for youth. Therefore, the Foundation believes that a school enhancement effort, if it is to be successful, must be based on a thorough understanding of faculty and community experiences in this area. It is important that these experiences be examined in the course of the proposed appraisal process so that obstacles encountered in the past can be avoided.

The school appraisal process is not intended to supercede other initiatives. Rather, an on-going appraisal that involves and reflects the views of those affected by the school will become a valuable source of continuing information concerning the operations of the school and its impact on those affiliated with it. This information combined with prior knowledge and evaluation data can drive school planning efforts in a powerful way.

The areas noted above are not presented as all inclusive, but as some suggested categories that the Foundation believes are necessary to explore if schools are serious about making the type of fundamental changes necessary to meet the expectations associated with the New Futures Initiative. Although schools should feel free to develop their own assessment batteries, we do not believe that schools must reinvent the assessment wheel.

Currently, there are numerous school based appraisal tools that are available for use. For example, the Middle Grades Assessment Program (MGAP) developed by the Center for Early Adolescence; The School

Assessment Survey, by Research for Better Schools; and The Connecticut School Effectiveness Survey are some examples of instruments than have demonstrated merit in helping schools address some of the issues discussed. Results from the in-school student, teacher, administrator, and parent surveys conducted as part of the new Futures evaluation may also be used in the process.

Management of the appraisal process: As mentioned above, the overall process should be driven and overseen by a representative school planning team. This team can coordinate assessment and evaluation data and use the information to affect decisions regarding school climate, curriculum and instruction, school organization, and school policies. But, in order for the planning team to be effective, there must be commitment and support from the superintendent and other administrators. High level administrators must commit not only to participate in the process but also to stand by its results. In addition, they must provide visible support in the form of time and other necessary resources to assure a meaningful process.

V. Technical Assistance Plans

The Foundation is aware that such appraisal and the subsequent planning that will emerge may be new to many of the schools involved in New Futures. Given this, we are prepared to offer extensive technical assistance over the coming year. For example, working through the New Futures Institute, the Foundation plans to:

- provide on-site technical assistance to develop Year II proposals;

- offer an off-site Summer Institute for Superintendent and principals involved in New Futures schools and other New Futures staff. This will focus on integrating school improvement processes into future planning for New Futures;

- offer, to teachers, representatives of collective bargaining units, parents, and other staff in New Futures schools, on-site technical assistance that will focus on ways of improving current New Futures school-based initiatives and preparing for the start of the on-going appraisal and planning process;

- provide on-site technical assistance -- throughout the course of the next several years -- that will focus on implementing a school-based appraisal and planning process. Possible topics might include team-building, shared decision making, and school mission development;

- offer periodic meetings of staff representatives and parents from all schools in New Futures to learn more about school improvement strategies and share information; and

- provide opportunities for school staff and parents to learn about successful practices around areas in which they choose to develop initiatives for Year II and beyond (for example, clustering, remedial education, alternative discipline practices, integrated curricula, experiential learning, etc.). This will be done in any number of ways, including reviews of literature, on-site technical assistance, and interactions with model programs.

VI. Conclusion

The Foundation clearly expects that New Futures schools think about their educational initiatives differently that they have to date. The expectations that we hold, the issues that we believe must be addressed and the processes which we suggest are not standard fare for many schools. But neither is New Futures. This is an opportunity to examine and strengthen institutions so that the policies and practices in which they engage may be maximally responsive to the needs of all youth. Schools, because of the large role they necessarily assume, can be a driving force and example for the institutional changes we seek throughout New Futures cities.

In summary, the education plan for New Futures puts forth the following propositions:

- Schools must move beyond current initiatives which primarily engage at-risk youth in activities that supplement regular school practices. While the Foundation recognizes that New Futures cities are currently at various stages in their implementation of first year plans, it still expects that future efforts will reflect revisions and expansions that affect entire schools.

- The Foundation expects that initiatives developed for the coming years will be those that strengthen areas of school climate, curriculum and instruction, school organization, and school policy.

- The Foundation expects that as a prelude to developing initiatives that affect these areas, New Futures schools will actively engage in a school-based appraisal and planning process that will begin in Year II and set the stage for more ambitious initiatives to be implemented in Year III and beyond.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

I. Overview

When the Foundation reviewed the field of youth development for approaches to assisting young people to achieve independence, we chose youth employment to complement strategies for school improvement and pregnancy prevention. We chose it in part because of the essential interaction between employment skills and other aspects of youth service, especially education. Two decades of research on youth employment confirm that if young people complete high school able to read and with positive work experiences and attitudes, they begin with powerful advantages leading to future economic self-sufficiency. They are equipped with the power of choice: they can seek an entry-level, career ladder job, go on to postsecondary education, get more specific training, or some combination. The experiences of practitioners both in education and in employment during the same period confirm this research and suggest approaches to helping young people achieve.

In summary, the purposes of the employment aspect of New Futures are:

- to improve the long term employment prospects of middle and high school students by encouraging them to stay in school;

- o to strengthen their skills through a graduated sequence of world of work education, work experience and academic enhancement;

- o to create an awareness in youth of career options, by connecting academic experiences with "real world" exposure, by offering future-oriented incentives to young people, and by assuring basic skill development; and

- o to complement and support the educational improvement and pregnancy prevention efforts being undertaken by New Futures, usually with the same youth and at the same time.

It is important to stress that the goals of New Futures extend well beyond a list of programmatic or "component" objectives. New Futures aims to change the way whole communities think about and act towards their young people. Accordingly, the ultimate aim of the employment aspect of New Futures is to prompt communities to create new and durable relationships between employment and education, and among schools, other youth serving agencies, businesses, and families. Fulfilling the vision of New Futures will require each community to reorganize its programs and refocus their resources **together** into a strategic **system** to assist those most at risk, and to foster the idea of opportunity -- jobs -- in the community for those young people who make the commitment to school.

According to the most experienced people in the field, program services are likely to work best which:

- o **begin early;**

- o are driven by information about young people obtained by **ongoing assessment;**

- o **combine educational skill development with training or work;**

- o are **competency-based**; and

- o are strongly tied together by **case management.**

As the Foundation looked at these principles, and developed strategies for comprehensive city-wide strategies for at risk young people, we added another principle to the New Futures agenda:

- o **Taken together, the services offered to at-risk young people by New Futures should add up to a long-term agenda of sequenced services appropriate to a youth's age and state of development.**

At a community level, it should be clear that no one organization or agency -- neither New Futures nor local agencies administering the Job Training Partnership Act -- can accomplish these ends by itself: the most effective youth employment programs across the country have demonstrated the importance of **partnerships**, especially of substantive involvement of schools and of the business community, both within the actual programs and in providing jobs for those who persist in school to graduation.

These lessons underlie the design of New Futures; indeed, New Futures extends the partnership notion well past the employment aspects to the idea that the Oversight Collaborative drives community-wide reform of all aspects of service to at-risk youth. Within the broad outline of New Futures, the youth employment initiatives are evolving as a key aspect of a system of services and as an important tool for Collaboratives and New Futures staffs to use to build the overall alliances that the entire initiative seeks to develop.

The present New Futures cities have, in general, made a good beginning. However, most have focused more on adding new program services to those already available in their communities than on weaving new systems out of present and new services. That is a logical place to start, to be sure, and will form a good basis for the work still to be done.

Unfortunately, all five cities are struggling to define a new service system with, as yet, only fragmentary partnerships with local employers and with the Job Training Partnership Act network of agencies.

We should state definitively here: **plans for the second and succeeding years of New Futures should reflect a more ambitious, systemic and private-sector-involved plan than those laid out in the original proposals.** Every city will need to establish deeper and more collaborative relationships among youth-serving agencies, schools, parents, and business communities if they are to develop a durable system for New Futures youth.

The stakes are high, and increasingly well-known. Simply, too many young people drop out of high school, finish high school with poor reading and math skills and little or no work experience. And employers need an increasingly well-prepared workforce -- new employees who can be productive in their first jobs, and learn their next jobs. These two trends -- poor preparation and accelerating skill demands -- are on a collision course in most American cities, and not least the five New Futures cities. If both trends are not reversed, both local economies and individual young people will pay the price.

II. Foundation Expectations

As suggested above, and discussed in earlier publications of the Foundation and in New Futures Institute training sessions, the Casey Foundation believes that the best youth employment systems will be built on a few key principles. Here we discuss them briefly:

Principle #1: The best systems have programs which intervene early. To effectively respond to the opportunities of New Futures, Oversight Collaboratives will need to develop a coherent system of programs and activities, tailored to individual needs, that offers students a graduated, flexible sequence of employment-related experiences and education. As suggested above, school year and summer services (particularly community service and compensatory education) should begin **early** -- no later than middle school. Many young people, "at risk" or not, have a difficult time making the transition from elementary school to middle or junior high school, and the seeds of poor academic achievement and dropping out are planted. Moreover, summer "learning decay" -- the phenomenon that young people from backgrounds of poverty lose much of what they had gained during the previous year by inactivity during the summer -- has been documented as early as fifth and sixth grades, and poor academic achievement, in turn, is a major factor in school leaving.

It should not be surprising that these pressures bear particularly on young people who are coping with the onset of puberty. While it may seem early to begin dealing with concepts of work and career in the sixth grade, these concepts, properly integrated into young lives, can create a powerful tie between current experiences and a productive future.

Principle #2: Services should be assessment-driven. Not all young people are alike. The system being developed should acknowledge the differences among young people by basing plans for individuals on knowledge about their unique needs and interests. We say that such a system should be "client-centered", or "assessment-driven". (Note: these

recommendations about assessment and case management for effective employment programs echo similar ones in the rest of the New Futures strategies; we are recommending a unified assessment here, which will provide information about **all** aspects of a young person's need for assistance, not just about his or her employment interests and capabilities.)

An efficient assessment strategy for employment programs uses a combination of techniques (paper and pencil testing and observation of behavior at work or at a model interview, for example) to assess strengths and weaknesses in basic skills, work maturity, career awareness, and job specific skills. Regular assessments, assisted by parents, during a young person's program participation can identify students' evolving interests, verify their skill gains or competencies, and identify areas where additional work is needed. Blending such an assessment with other efforts to determine student needs and skills will naturally be a local process. Its particular design will depend upon the structure and processes outlined for assessment and case management throughout New Futures. In summary, we strongly recommend that different assessments be coordinated, lest the process make fragmentation of information and services worse, not better.

Assessment results, however derived, can provide powerful information that case managers can then use in developing a service plan for each participant, in arranging the student's participation in appropriate program elements, and in reviewing the effectiveness of services received.

Principle #3: Employment-oriented services should be tied directly with basic skills development. Among the tools young people need for long term, stable employment, basic reading and math skills are perhaps the most critical. While the skill requirements of almost all jobs are steadily rising, more and more studies document an unacceptable level of illiteracy and inadequate basic skills among both young people and adults. The most current research in the field has powerfully associated poor basic skills with poverty, unemployment, early school leaving, adolescent pregnancy and welfare dependency. At the same time, the experience of

the Job Corps, the Summer Training and Employment Program (STEP), and other programs which combine basic education with training or work experience, offer strong evidence of the effectiveness of concentrated basic skill development for young people who arrive at job programs with poor cognitive skills.

This again points out the need to design employment aspects of New Futures in conjunction with plans for educational services being offered by and with school systems. A separate system of employment-oriented remediation, offered without the knowledge or participation of the school systems in New Futures cities, defeats the initiative's underlying goal of institutional change. It is likely, however, that the best efforts of the school improvement aspects of New Futures will leave some youth in need of remedial skill-building. Computer-based and computer-managed instruction systems like those provided by CCP (the Comprehensive Competencies Program), by the Computer Corporation of America, and new programs currently in development both in Canada and the United States offer real promise; more information can be provided by the Foundation and the New Futures Institute.

Principle #4: Employment services should be competency-based. People who work in employment and training often confront a practical dilemma: there is considerable pressure to search for a "bottom-line" in jobs programs, which will measure accomplishments by short term job placement. On the other hand, many recognize the potential of career development and job training to serve younger people, for longer periods of time as part of an "early intervention" strategy. Given its preventive cast, New Futures is probably an extreme example of this tension. On one hand, employers will rightly wish to assess the effectiveness of New Futures' employment programs by counting how many jobs were provided to New Futures' graduates. On the other hand, New Futures wishes to begin with youth while they are still in middle or junior high school, and serve many of them for a long time with career or employment services.

The answer to this dilemma, it seems to us, lies in designing program services which are clear about what they intend to teach, and

willing to be measured based on their accomplishments. In the jargon of the field, this is "competency-based programming". And of course, it easier to name and describe than it is to do.

Essentially, competency-based programming builds program services, especially classroom instruction and training, around the accomplishment of certain learning objectives and the demonstration of mastery by students. The approach usually begins with business people establishing a set of measurable abilities --competencies -- which they require for entry-level employment. Generally divided into three categories -- pre-employment, basic skills, and work maturity -- these competencies are then divided into subskill areas and in turn assigned to programs of curriculum and instruction. Students are assessed before beginning the program, re-assessed at various points during the program to see if they have reached certain mileposts or benchmarks, then tested again at the end of the program or period to see if they are "competent" in each subject matter taught by the program.

The opportunity exists to use New Futures to "leverage" its partner systems to develop competency-driven employment and training systems. The Job Training Partnership Act system has had some experience with this notion, (as have many educators), and since it squares with the Foundation's preferences for accountability with clear measures of outcomes for young people, we recommend that New Futures cities consider it seriously. The youth employment specialists at the New Futures Institute have a good deal of experience with this approach and are prepared to help design local systems and to plan coordination with other systems, notably JTPA programs.

Principle #5: Support services are often needed to enable youth to participate in employment programs. For many at risk youth, sustained participation in education and work experience will require parental support and the provision of support services such as child care, transportation, health services and counseling. Communities with a large population of adolescent parents, for example, may want to examine options for providing day care in school buildings and in conjunction with

summer jobs. Other communities may need to offer transportation vouchers or develop van services for widely scattered summer jobs.

While the specifics may vary, strong ties to the local social services network will be required of programs in most communities. A well case-managed program, such as that envisaged by most New Futures cities, can help assure that such services are provided. And while many students will already be receiving such services under New Futures, some new enrollees in youth employment programs will not. For these students, the availability of support services may make the difference between participating in an employment program or not.

Principle #6: A genuine "system" will require thinking through a sequence of services which provide sustained assistance over time. As important as the content of individual services delivered to youth is the **system** which ties them together. New Futures is fundamentally premised on a long-term strategy, which merges the needs of youth with the long view of how to support their development. This is a somewhat new way of thinking for many employment and training people, who tend to view program services -- such as remediation or pre-employment skills training or work experience -- one at a time. Frequently, their program services are driven by annual planning cycles, and their accomplishments are generally judged by relatively short-term measures of job placement and per - participant costs.

The employment system developed for New Futures should offer a **range of service elements** and a **sequence of services** that meet the needs of participants over time, and at different ages. On a range of services, the New Futures Strategic Planning Guide noted that, "No single program approach solves all youth unemployment problems... a coherent array of programs is usually needed to serve the multiple and varying needs of a community's at-risk youth population." Moreover, most experience suggests that programs with several different service "elements" are more likely to produce results than single service efforts -- for example, work experience combined with education, labor market preparation or training is more effective than work experience alone. It is rare that younger

students will need only one employment-related service, and even older students -- say, juniors and seniors in high school -- will benefit from several carefully planned services designed to ease the transition from school to work or college.

Regarding a sequence of services we know the following: Youths' needs tend to follow a sequence by age, with education based services most appropriate for younger youth and labor-market oriented services more appropriate for older participants. For New Futures communities, this means that,

- o beginning in the middle schools, students should receive an introduction to the broader community and to the world of work. So called "world of work" or career education materials can form a separate course, be integrated into regular school curriculum (in social studies or language arts programs, for example) and can be supplemented by speakers from area businesses or tours of local firms;

- o if indicated by the assessment, remedial education should be begun for those students who need it. For those too young to work for pay, community service programs or recreation programs can be designed in conjunction with educational programs;

- o summer employment for youth as soon as they are of working age (generally in a nonprofit or public sector setting) should be made available, again coupled with ("enriched") by remedial education;

- o older students require opportunities for further career exploration, labor market preparation and employment. Communities may offer labor market orientation classes, including job counseling, instruction on resume preparation, and assistance with job searching skills;

- career education courses, job shadowing, and part-time employment during the school year can also build on earlier world of work programs. It may be appropriate for some students to take part in a cooperative education program or skills training; and

- during each summer, public and private sector summer jobs can provide additional work experience tied to remediation and academic year activities. Each young person should understand that every summer will involve some combination of work and educational activities, with both job and education built sequentially, one summer on the last, with greater independence and greater responsibility expected each year, leading to the promise of a job or access to college for successful graduates.

Three elements are critical for such a sequenced approach to work effectively. The first is that program designs need to be appropriate for the age and needs of the youth being served. In the same way that youth programs cannot simply copy adult models, programs for middle school youths cannot simply be scaled down versions of programs for older youth. They have to be designed to address the interests and learning capacities of younger students.

The second element is that there needs to be a clear connection and progression among the programs in the sequence. Ideally, school-year programs will have a direct tie to the summer program and vice versa, so that a student's performance during the school-year determines his or her summer activity and his or her summer job evaluation shapes the in-school activities the following fall.

The need to make these connections points back to the importance of ongoing assessment and case management, but it also points out the need for schools, JTPA and other organizations to agree on some common ways of assessing skills and of sharing information across institutional lines.

The third element relates to implementation strategies more than simply to design. Simply put, employment systems need to be "open-entry", meaning that a student must be able to begin the sequence at any age and time, and at whatever stage of development assessment demonstrates that they are. Though the "picket fence" chart shown in the next section appears to imply a lock-step sequence beginning in the middle grades, a high school sophomore or junior identified by case managers or school personnel as in need of these services should be able to enter the sequence as appropriate.

III. Development and Implementation

The management challenge faced by New Futures in each city is to meld all these good ideas (and their local versions of them) into a single system -- one that provides a sequence of services over time and that offers an array of program strategies to address the different skill levels and needs of a community's youth. In addition to identifying key program elements, the youth employment research and experiences of the past two decades suggest a number of practical principles that should guide implementation of any major youth initiative. As they apply to New Futures, here are a few of these principles:

Decide whom to serve. We suggest that program participation should be open to all youth identified as "at-risk", not limited to those meeting a means test or income eligibility. On one hand, narrow income targeting stigmatizes program participants and limits community support. At the same time, many some students --regardless of their family's income -- are likely to need remediation and assistance in moving from school to work. By opening the program to all at-risk youth in the community, young people who need services will have access. Moreover, participation should be based more upon severity or complexity of youths' needs than upon whether they are eligible by some arbitrary standard such as income.

In this vein, several of the cities have begun to plan programs for a "matrix" of young people, which allows them to match services to the severity of need, or qualities of "at-riskness" and which arrays services to each over time. Crudely, this approach might look graphically like this:

AGE	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	and up
"AT RISKNESS"								
"mild" needs								
moderate								
serious								

Cities could use such a simple approach for several things. They could use it to "map" current services and identify gaps which need to be filled. Or they could use it to plan a full array of services by targeting particular youth, and then apply the matrix as a sort of "template" over current services. In short, this approach allows planners to subdivide the population of young people, and array their likely needs by age, so they can then begin to plan services for them. It attempts to capture the quality of variable need even among an "at-risk" population. It is premised on a simple notion: within a general developmental sequence (over time), an effective system also has to provide a range of program options reflecting the different needs of youth. While some youth may need intensive remediation and a basic introduction to work concepts, others may be ready to proceed with specific career planning.

Phase in the employment system, but serve students in several different grades from the beginning. Program implementation should start small and build as experience and management capacity grows. This suggestion has two parts. First, the Foundation endorses the basic approach most cities are already taking: pilot testing their programs in one or two schools to limit the risks inherent in a new program and to gain experience before expanding services city-wide.

The second part of the suggestion looks forward to planning for the second year and beyond and holds that **while limiting the number of sites to current New Futures schools, implementation of some program services for each part of the sequence -- middle through high school -- should take place as soon as possible, preferably during the next year.**

What does this mean? Simply this: rather than waiting, for example, for all current middle schoolers to advance through the program, adding services to them as they go, services should be instituted for students in all current New Futures schools from the beginning, and entry into employment or career programs should be possible for students at any age or grade level, starting as soon as possible.

While complicating implementation, there are compelling reasons for this approach. First, it is politically important to demonstrate services for older youth -- those who will soon be graduating and entering the labor market. Second, the business community's interest and involvement as partners and providers of jobs cannot be suspended for the several

years it would take for the first "cohort" to age into full-time job eligibility. Businesses must begin connecting with the schools and their students from the beginning. Third, younger students need to see that the program is real and offers a full set of services if they are to make a commitment to it early on.

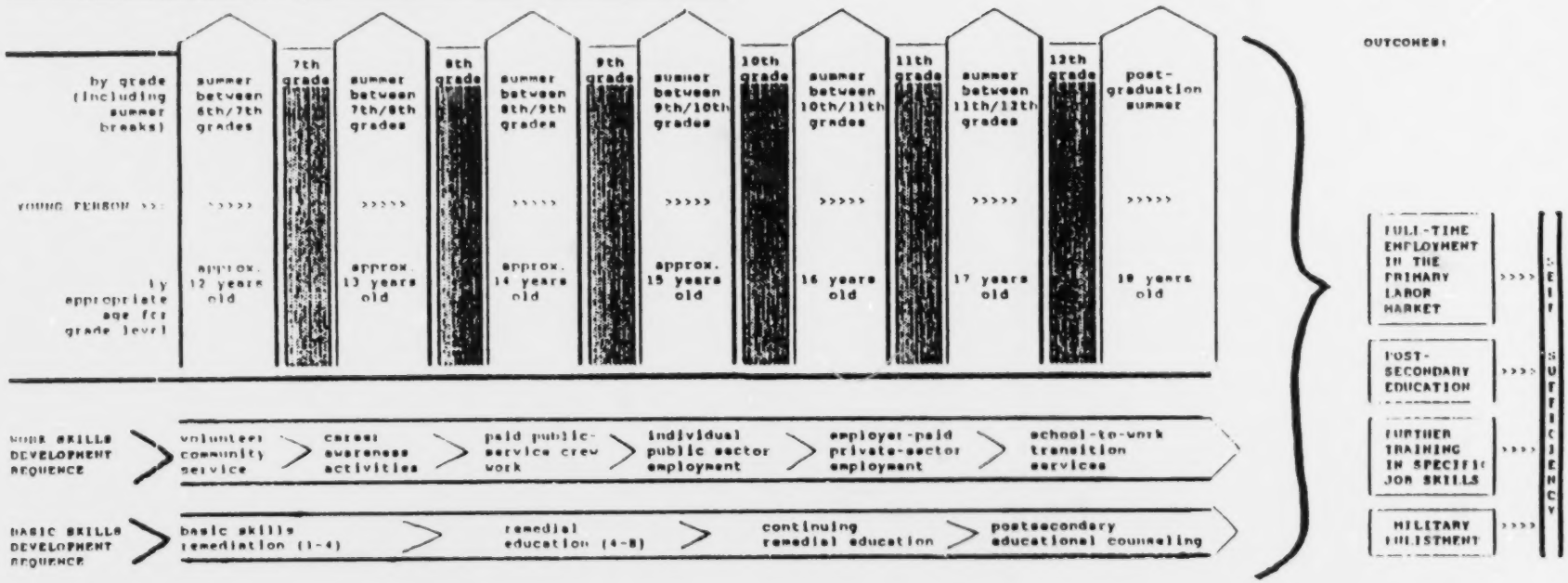
An alternative to this approach may be as effective programmatically and easier to implement. Where it is not possible to initiate program services throughout each year of a five or six grade range, an alternative approach is to begin services for several cohorts -- for the seventh, ninth and eleventh grades, for example. This approach allows implementation to be spread over several years while still aiding older youth, providing more immediate benefits, and demonstrating the progression of services that will ultimately be offered. This tests the theory that there are several "key transition points" in a young person's life in school -- from elementary to middle school, from middle to high school, from high school to beyond -- where the right interventions may ease the way to success in the next stage.

Notwithstanding the advice outlined above, we should affirm again the suggestion that cities should have a clear vision of what the system will look like when fully assembled. Specifically, **the Foundation recommends building on the sequence of school years and summers as the framework for a multi-year approach to employability.**

Beginning in middle school years, and adding services progressively through graduation, each summer offers an opportunity to gain experience working in an increasingly "real world" environment, beginning with a mix of volunteer work and recreation for middle school youth, then structured crew work the following summer, then individual work experience in a nonprofit setting, and finally private sector summer jobs the junior and senior years.

During the school year, in-school programs can offer a sequence of increasingly sophisticated career and labor market education. While the overall framework is on a year-by-year basis, individual students might progress more quickly or slowly depending on their maturity and level of skill.

The sequence which results from this step-by-step, year-by-year construction, would look graphically something like the "picket fence" displayed on the next page.


THE PICKET FENCE: A DEVELOPMENTALLY-STRUCTURED PROGRESSION OF YOUTH SERVICES
by grade (including summer breaks)
summer between 6th/7th grades
7th grade
summer between 7th/8th grades
8th grade
summer between 8th/9th grades
9th grade
summer between 9th/10th grades
10th grade
summer between 10th/11th grades
11th grade
summer between 11th/12th grades
12th grade
post-graduation summer
YOUNG PERSON >>:
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
by appropriate age for grade level
approx. 12 years old
approx. 13 years old
approx. 14 years old
approx. 15 years old
16 years old
17 years old
18 years old
WORK SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SEQUENCE
volunteer community service
career awareness activities
paid public-service crew work
individual public sector employment
employer-paid private-sector employment
school-to-work transition services
BASIC SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SEQUENCE
basic skills remediation (1-4)
remedial education (4-8)
continuing remedial education
postsecondary educational counseling
OUTCOMES:
FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT IN THE PRIMARY LABOR MARKET
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
FURTHER TRAINING IN SPECIFIC JOB SKILLS
MILITARY ENLISTMENT
SELF SUFFICIENCY

One can see that this builds on the earlier notion, recommending a "matrix" approach to planning employment programs. If one adds the dimension of differential need to the sequence outlined in the "picket fence" chart, one can get a sense of the approach the Foundation recommends. By creating a graduated sequence of programs, and by offering a range of service elements keyed to their own needs, a community makes it possible for students to take part in a relatively individualized progression of services determined according to their assessed needs.

For an older, relatively mature student with strong academic skills, that sequence might be briefer and less intensive. It might, for example, include job shadowing, summer jobs with private firms, mentor assistance with college application and some form of financial aid. For a younger and less well-prepared student, the program might include a more classroom-based career education and a labor market orientation program, school-year and summer school classes, a more gradual progression over several years from community service to public sector job to tryout employment to private sector summer jobs, and placement in a full-time job after graduation. The point is to have the flexibility to meet the needs of young people who are not all equally at risk, and to build the capacity to meet them **when** they are needed, with age - and need - appropriate services.

Know whose help you will need, and develop strategies to enlist it. Consistent with the collaborative approach inherent in New Futures, we recommend that each collaborative board member and staff person work at gaining the support and assistance of key actors not directly under New Futures' control, but whose help New Futures will absolutely need:

- **Involvement of the business community is critical.**

The Foundation is convinced that youth employment initiatives will be among the best ways to involve this community resource, drawing business people and organizations into broader commitment to New

Futures through this tangible route. Without a commitment of jobs at graduation, few employment programs will gain the credibility needed to keep young people in school. Business involvement is also vital in providing information on the labor market and in developing the political support that is necessary for the survival of any youth program in a time of restricted budgets and federal funding cuts.

At the same time, businesses will not commit jobs and dollars without an equally clear commitment from the schools to perform their end of the bargain -- usually by improving the skills and job readiness of their students. In addition to the tangible contributions -- jobs during the summer and full-time jobs for graduates, people to serve as mentors, cash for special projects -- a partnership with the business community, which might be **leveraged** through participation in employment programs, provides key, long-term **political** leadership for New Futures' short term success and long-term prospects.

- **School personnel -- administrators, teachers, guidance staff -- should be involved early and regularly in program planning.**

While you will see this idea expressed in the discussion of education programs and institutional change, it is at least as true for programs linking school and work. Developing the kinds of systems and program described in this section will require literally hundreds of daily accommodations -- in scheduling, testing procedures, alterations in curriculum, and so forth. Without the active support of the staff at participating schools, programs are likely to get bogged down by turf battles, resistance to new procedures, and administrative red tape.

In many cases, program experience suggests not only the early involvement of school staff in planning, but the location of program components in the school and the hiring of educators (e.g., former teachers) as school-based coordinators or liaisons.

- **Parents need to support and be involved in the development and implementation of a successful youth employment policy.**

In order to maintain a strong and effective youth employment policy, parents and the community need to be consistent in the messages delivered to youth. To facilitate this, schools and community organizations can empower parents by educating and training them on the various employment options available to their children. In addition, both parents and institutions should make decisions about the services adolescents receive. Some New Futures cities have gone this recommendation one better by organizing ambitious, neighborhood-based initiatives to involve parents, community organizations and even neighborhood associations to support both the "service" and "political" agendas of New Futures. Such initiatives can be of great assistance to the planning for Career and employment programs, providing community service opportunities for younger kids, developing jobs in small companies in and around the neighborhood, and tying together employment with school experiences.

- **All of a community's financial resources must be tapped to provide a full range of programs and services.**

No single funding source, including the grants made by the Annie E. Casey Foundation for New Futures, can support the array of services required by an effective youth employment system. Nor can foundation grants themselves provide the longer term funding stability that such a system needs. Rather, New Futures project administrators need to use the Casey grants to leverage existing community resources such as JTPA's 8% education grants, Title IIB summer job funds and Title IIA training monies; mainstream, adult and occupational education resources from the Perkins Act and other local and state sources; Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, welfare monies, as well as local foundation and corporate grants. Foundation funds, in truth, exist as **leverage**, and will be spread too thin if they are simply used as "gap-fillers", providing services where current providers or funders find it inconvenient to assist.

Implementing such an array of services will require much more than rearranging the current furniture of JTPA contracts, cooperative

education agreements and vocational programs. Those furnishings will be required, to be sure, but the key to any **real** community-wide employment strategy is the creation of a genuine, far-ranging **partnership** with the business community, the schools, and other appropriate institutions based on mutually agreed upon, measurable goals.

In summary, an effective youth employment system brings together an array of activities, including career education, work experience and remediation; organizes them into one or, ideally, several sequences of services addressing different types or levels of needs; and manages them through regular participant assessments, case management, MIS and follow-up systems. Driving the system, providing measurable goals and concrete incentives in terms of jobs and higher education, is a partnership between the business community, the schools, the family and other appropriate community agencies. Together, those services, management tools and collaborative community investment can provide the support that at risk youth need as they prepare for economic self-sufficiency.

IV. Activities for the second year

It is unlikely that any New Futures city can develop and fully implement a full sequential system in this next year. However, there is little reason to think that such a system cannot be implemented progressively over the next two years and be largely operational during the third year of New Futures. That will require cities to make important progress in the next year, and plans for such progress should be reflected in the second year plan. While each city is at a different starting point, the following recommendations seem generally applicable:

- each city should develop a "map" of current services for different ages of youth and different levels of risk, following something like the "matrix" offered earlier;

- each city should develop an assessment or evaluation process for appraising the effectiveness of current services in the employment and training area. This assessment process should include current services offered by JTPA-funded agencies, school - based vocational and career education, and private and public sector (but not JTPA) summer jobs programs; and

- each city should reflect in their second year plan a step-wise development plan for implementation of a sequential system of services for at-risk youth in the city, starting with youth in the current New Futures "target" area, if there is one, and showing a strategy for expansion city wide over time.

- each city should look hard at its plans for case management and figure out how to provide "interim" case management services for young people entering the employment sequence later than middle school (which is where all the cities are currently focusing their case management services). It may

be that JTPA or vocational education currently have case management approaches that can be tied with New Futures, or that teachers can be retained through supplementary payments to provide such services. It is likely that such services can be less intensive than the "comprehensive" case management beginning in the younger years, and that ratios, say, can be higher, but it remains the case that the best employment services are case-managed.

V. Technical assistance plans

Working through the New Futures Institute, the Foundation will make several forms of assistance and training available to New Futures cities:

- o one two-day training session for teams of people from each city to discuss techniques and principles of effective youth employment programming (this will be a follow-up session to the December 1988 session held in Savannah);

- o a training "track", consisting of several sessions as well as opportunities for exchanges of ideas among cities at the annual Institute, currently scheduled for July in Vermont;

- o follow-up planning and technical assistance sessions in each city, with teams of experts led by the NFI person assigned to each city for youth employment assistance;

- o occasional papers on effective practices, new concepts, or written guidance on technical issues (e.g., understanding and using JTPA, the Perkins Vocational Education Act, assessment, competency-based programming, remedial education approaches, school-to-work transition programs, mentoring, parental support, and other topics seem likely subjects); and

- o a pool of days available for assistance on an "on-call", or as-needed basis, initiated by each city for their own particular needs.

VI. Conclusion

Within this broad framework of program elements and implementation strategies, many variations are possible. The activities that can be incorporated into world of work education, remediation and work experience strategies, assessment and case management approaches, and the terms of the bargains or partnerships struck by business communities and schools can and should differ from city to city, based on the nature of the youth population, the inventory of existing programs, local resources and priorities, and local choices about program design.

While the specific New Futures approach to youth employment will vary from community to community, one element will be common to every site's experience. In **every** community, tangible changes in the current practices of local employment and training and education institutions will have to take place: budgets and operating practices will have to be reorganized; incentives will need to be provided for students, for teachers and for business people to change accustomed ways of working; parents will need to be trained on the youth employment options available to their children; jobs will have to be provided for program participants and graduates; budgets will have to be reallocated for schools and other service agencies; the real skills of entry-level employees will have to be improved to convince business people that their participation is a worthy investment. For New Futures to work, in short, communities will have to make a commitment to act. Mere rhetoric will not suffice.

PREVENTING TEEN PREGNANCY IN NEW FUTURES

I. Overview

A major focus of New Futures is to help young people have a brighter future. Since early childbearing impedes this, New Futures has included preventing teen pregnancies as a measurable goal. This decision was made after careful deliberation, as the Foundation board was aware that public discussions of teen pregnancy and childbearing carry a heavy emotional charge. Implicit in these discussions are conflicts about changing sexual mores and family patterns and questions about the nature of poverty, dependency, opportunity and equity in our society. The negative consequences of teenage childbearing, including long-term lowered educational achievement and economic status, have been well documented.

Some experts suggest that teen pregnancy is a prime reason why females drop out of school, and the links between dropout prevention and teen pregnancy prevention are strong. Yet, in most New Futures cities implementation of the teen pregnancy prevention interventions has been difficult. Delays have been caused by controversy and/or bureaucracy. The purpose of this section of the Implementation Guide is to help New Futures communities to examine the solutions they designed to assist young people in postponing sexual involvement or in avoiding pregnancy, and for those who

are already parents, in completing high school and preventing additional pregnancies. As with other sections of the Implementation Guide, this represents the Foundation's current thinking in this area, reflected in its expectations and suggested activities for Year Two and beyond. It is not intended to be prescriptive, particularly since each city has a unique sensitivity toward this subject. In addressing the teen pregnancy prevention goals of New Futures, it is important that each city analyze its own situation, prioritize objectives and proceed down a path that meets these goals most effectively.

II. Foundation Expectations

The New Futures first year plans described problems in the existing array of programs and services serving at-risk youth. These problems include inaccessibility, insufficiency, inadequate coordination of multiple services to multiple problem youth, and the lack of a common overall policy direction and priority-setting process among multiple systems. Policymakers and planners recognized that the myriad causes of teenage pregnancy are interwoven in patterns of poverty and school failure. They realized that many teens who are likely to become parents often share common characteristics and backgrounds, including:

- o low self-esteem;
- o poor school performance;
- o poor communication and decision-making skills;
- o insufficient family support;
- o limited or inaccurate information about sexuality and birth control; and
- o limited access to family-planning and health services.

Most New Futures initiatives take these factors into account, and all plans called for some special school and community-based prevention services targeted at specific youth. However, the Foundation believes that if New Futures Initiatives are to effectively deal with this issue, then city plans must be broader. Specifically, over the next five years, cities should work to develop a comprehensive **system** of pregnancy prevention services which will be available to all youngsters in their community.

What does a comprehensive pregnancy prevention system look like? A community-wide adolescent pregnancy prevention system **endorsed by the New Futures Oversight Collaborative** would consist of the following components:

- o educational reform;
- o efforts that support successful adolescent development;

- o sex education and life planning; and
- o comprehensive health services including reproductive health care.

If, by the end of five years, New Futures communities hope to see a reduction in the number of young women who become pregnant, current initiatives must be rethought to include activities aimed at primary (first pregnancy) and secondary (subsequent pregnancies) prevention. This system needs to reflect the different ages, value systems, and needs of all youth and their families. In some instances, it may mean that efforts will initially be focused on segments of the teen population identified as most at-risk or most reachable. In other cases, a community may choose to target services in neighborhoods with the greatest needs. Either approach could then be expanded to incorporate greater numbers of teens in subsequent years.

Cities will, of course, require resources to develop such a system. Given that new monies in this area are, in most instances, not readily available, it is important that cities also find more effective ways to reconfigure, combine, and target the resources they have available to them. It is important that progress in teen pregnancy prevention be continually made over the next five years, and that cities take steps to grapple with this complex issue.

III. Development and Implementation

An important first step toward developing a system of pregnancy prevention services is to initiate a **process** for raising the level of discussion, advocacy, and commitment to this issue. Oversight Collaboratives should take the time to examine their service inventories and New Futures staff should set up (or re-energize) a special committee, including interested service providers and community representatives, to provide guidance to the Collaborative and to work on keeping the issue visible. With the help of this group, the Oversight Collaborative can become the vehicle for organizing community support around this sometimes still controversial issue.

As with the development of any youth system, it is important to remember that **in pregnancy prevention the breadth and depth of planned interventions will be about equal to outcomes.** Therefore, this process should lead to a systematic approach which includes providing young people with both the motivation and the means to avoid pregnancy. This is important, as research on adolescent pregnancy prevention has shown that high self-esteem, academic achievement, and the possibility of going to college or getting a good job are more likely than anything else to motivate young people not to engage in risk-taking behaviors, including sexual activity leading to pregnancy. For example, in <u>When Children Want Children</u>, Leon Dash points out that his extensive interviews with youngsters who live in one of Washington, D.C.'s poorest neighborhoods have convinced him that a primary cause of teen pregnancy is that young people need a tangible achievement. Childbearing is one area they think will allow them some control. To counter this, efforts to improve school effectiveness, expand college and career opportunities, and provide supportive adult counsel are critical since they are aimed at helping children reach adolescence with self-confidence, a desire for learning, and real aspirations for the future.

The importance of motivation underscores the need for each New Futures city to engage in a process of educational reform that will improve their schools' ability to provide quality education for all students. Teens most likely to become parents are those doing poorly in school -- students who, somewhere along the line, may have gotten the implicit or explicit message that they probably will not finish school. Under such circumstances, these young people, both boys and girls, may consciously opt for other ways to

achieve, including having a child. Because school success can illuminate a brighter future for young people and provide them with a strong sense of self-worth, it can be a powerful motivator in helping students to avoid early pregnancy. A long-term commitment to improve schools is therefore a necessary correlate to pregnancy prevention.

By the same token, because students' motivation is enhanced when they perceive that there is an incentive for hard work and application, cities should reaffirm commitments to changing career prospects for youth. The promise of a good career or the opportunity to go to college may help a young person make wiser choices and help them to delay sexual activity or to avoid becoming parents at an early age. Enrichment efforts, such as after-school programs, summer learning, recreation, and community service opportunities also fit well into a community strategy for improving adolescent development and should play a role in motivating young people to avoid pregnancy.

However, motivation is only part of the story, and alone it is not enough. Young people also need the **means** to avoid parenthood. Therefore, a New Futures pregnancy prevention strategy should be multi-faceted. It should increase youths' knowledge about sexuality and contraception, improve their communication with both parents and peers, and provide access to quality health services, including reproductive health services, in a comfortable and confidential setting.

Developing and Implementing a Strategy:

There are several key principles in effective development and implementation of a pregnancy prevention strategy. They are:

- o be clear about whom you mean to serve;
- o develop a continuum of services to meet their needs; and
- o know who is needed for success and recruit them.

Principle #1: Be clear about whom you mean to serve. Some New Futures plans identify youth at-risk primarily according to school-related

characteristics (two years behind grade, low reading and math level, high absentee rates, etc.). In other plans, youth may be designated as "at-risk" by virtue of contact with the juvenile justice or child welfare systems and subsequent referral to a New Futures case manager. When dealing with pregnancy prevention we must look at an additional set of identifying factors. These include, in addition to low academic achievement, socio-economic status and behavioral attitudes about risk-taking behavior.

Socio-Economic Status: Poverty, particularly when viewed in conjunction with academic achievement, is a strong predictor for identifying young people who should be targeted for pregnancy prevention services. Indeed, research indicates that **teenagers who are poor and who have low school achievement** are five to ten times more likely to become teen parents than their counterparts who are from higher income families and who have more school success. For many New Futures communities, criteria based upon a combination of parental income and student achievement will target the majority of the students in some schools.

Behavioral attitudes about risk-taking: Identifying youth at risk of pregnancy also requires a knowledge of their risk-taking behavior. Such behavior can take many forms. It may mean experimenting with drugs and alcohol or it may mean becoming sexually active. Though some adolescents exhibit limited risk-taking behavior, many are at-risk because they are ignorant about sexual matters and sometimes engage in chance-taking behavior.

Teen sexual behavior can range from simple awareness to a variety of sexual activity patterns. Teens (including those at the middle-school level) have different types of sexual experiences. Some may begin dating, go steady, fall in love, and have a monogamous relationship. Others may begin experimenting with alcohol or other illegal substances and have unplanned sexual intercourse. What the various patterns have in common is that any of the types can result in a teenage pregnancy. Although sexual activity patterns do not correlate specifically with age, it is reasonable to assume that the percentage of sexually active teens in a high school population will be substantially higher than that in a middle school setting. However, there is

increasing evidence of the initiation of sexual activity among teenagers at younger ages. Most states report that while the pregnancy rate for older teens seems to be stabilizing, there has been a marked increase in the pregnancy rate for females who are between 10 and 14 years of age.

Principle #2: Develop a continuum of services. A community-wide program to prevent teenage pregnancy should respond to their different sexual activity patterns by including multiple strategies which are available to all young people and their families, regardless of performance in school, where they live, or family background. As noted earlier, these services need to provide young people with both the motivation and the means of avoiding pregnancy. For some youngsters, this may simply mean maintaining the educational and health system now in place. For others, existing services need to be enhanced, adding new components and new approaches. For some high risk youth, new interventions may need to be implemented. In addressing such a continuum, the New Futures case management system should link with prevention services and assist in identifying gaps to be addressed.

What should such a contiuum of services include? Clearly, two important areas are improved educational activities and community based services that provide opportunities for job exploration, training, and placement. School reform efforts, jobs compacts, and efforts that support successful adolescent development are all interventions central to the goals of reducing school dropout, youth unemployment, and teenage pregnancy and parenthood. Somewhat attenuated from direct pregnancy prevention services, these activities are appropriate for any continuum that addresses adolescent needs. Examples include programs that enhance education achievement, promote successful retention, and explore career opportunities, in addition to a variety of non-academic opportunities for success, like after-school clubs, jobs, and sports. The importance of such activities is described earlier in this section and in other sections of The Implementation Guide. Beyond this are several other important components, including:

- o sex education and family life education;
- o access to health services, including reproductive health care;

and

- special services for teenage parents.

Sex education and family life education and **access to comprehensive health services** are **areas to which particular attention should be paid,** as both are needed to have a positive effect on the teen pregnancy rate.

Sex education and family life education form critical building blocks on the continuum of services. Educational services for pregnancy prevention should begin early and include information about human reproduction and sexuality, education on decision-making concerning risk-taking behavior, human reproduction, and contraception. For older teens, knowledge of available local health services is particularly important. Communities need to analyze where sex education is offered, for how long, what is covered in the curriculum, who teaches it, how often it is offered, and what kind of training or on-going staff development is part of the program. Special attention should be paid to language barriers, functional illiteracy as well as limited English proficiency. Sex education needs to be linked with life planning so that connections are made between educational and career options and sexual behavior.

New Futures communities should have available all the necessary tools to reach their teen pregnancy prevention goals. It is important to remember that programs will not be effective if developed in isolation from one another or if young people experience difficulty in gaining access to the services. Some promising program examples include:

- **Abstinence Promotion Programs**

Programs to promote abstinence from sexual behavior are most appropriately begun with youngsters who are not yet sexually active. This strategy may be most effective when directed to children in elementary school, where it would reach a larger percentage of students who could be helped to defer sexual activity. It is generally agreed that it's a hard job to teach "Just Say No" after people have

started saying "Yes". However, assertiveness training and techniques for coping with peer relationships and peer pressure, often within the context of a larger sexuality program, have been shown to be promising with youngsters who have had episodic sexual experiences based on peer pressure. Abstinence promotion can be infused into the school curriculum or can be designed for after-school activities and presented by community or church groups. Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta has had success with its "Postponing Sexual Involvement" model.

o **Sexuality and Family Life Curricula**

Sex education and family life education are designed to provide young people with the information and decision-making skills they need to begin to make informed decisions. It can come from a variety of sources including parents, schools, community leaders, and trained peers. Effective sexuality and family life programs (judging by their ability to affect youth attitudes about sex) are comprehensive, age-appropriate, consistent, and intense. For example, given that kids know that important subjects like English, math, and social studies, are taught every year for all twelve years of school, they'll quickly interpret a short-term sex education course as being relatively unimportant in comparison if it is squeezed into one semester or presented in a haphazard way.

o **Life Planning Programs**

This program strategy places sex education in a context of vocational, career, and adult life planning, usually emphasizing the economic consequences of having children. Participants are asked to reflect on the cost of parenthood in terms of shortened education, diminished career options, reduced earnings, and more confined lifestyles.

o **Male Responsibility Programs**

Not all of the burden of pregnancy prevention should rest with teenage

girls. Boys, as well as girls, need help in making responsible decisions about sex. Male responsibility programs can provide young men with both information and support for their decisions. Some such interventions have successfully employed adult role models, while others rely on trained peer educators.

o **Peer Education Programs**

Peer education is designed to help youth give one another accurate information, counseling, and reinforcement. Such programs can be made a part of the regular school day or can be developed as a part of after-school or Saturday activities.

o **Parent/Child Communication Programs**

Parent education is another critical element of a pregnancy prevention strategy since parents, whether or not they are aware of it, are the primary sex educators for their children. Yet, many parents are unsure about how to discuss sex with their children. They often need help to communicate comfortably and effectively with pre-teens and teenagers about sexual behavior, reproduction, decision-making, and contraception. They also should be informed about the range and quality of health services available in the community.

Access to comprehensive health services for adolescents is a key element in any service continuum. Adolescents need assistance in becoming reponsible for their sexual behavior and need access to appropriate family planning and other reproductive health services. Contraceptive services include access to family planning, contraceptives, and pregnancy tests.

In some communities, adolescent health clinics based either on school grounds or nearby, have begun to address these needs. Comprehensive adolescent health clinics usually provide teenagers with health information, screening, counseling, clinic services and referrals for more specialized care.

Effective adolescent health services are accessible, confidential, and are provided to boys as well as to girls. Teens know about them, can get to them, and can use them without stigma and embarrassment. They are competently staffed by people who know about and care about young people.

Services for teens who are already parents include many of the services mentioned above, but they also include other kinds of help to assist youths in avoiding or delaying further childbearing. This is important, as unmarried teens with one child face even higher risks of dropping out of school, having subsequent pregnancies, and facing a life of dependency. Statistics gathered by the National Research Council indicate that almost 40% of teenage mothers reported a second pregnancy within two years. This population needs family planning services and also additional support in the form of quality childcare and parenting training. The best programs for teen parents link them with other services in the community; New Futures should link teen parents with existing brokers/case managers in programs designed to serve them.

Principle #3: Know who is needed for success and recruit them. Since pregnancy prevention is an inherently controversial topic in our society, cities should consider building strong constituency groups as part of their overall program development strategy. Private sector leadership will be important and useful in overcoming public misconceptions and in providing a credible base of public support. Business, community, church and social service agency leaders, youth and their parents should be all part of the effort. The community needs to be aware that city leaders, media and families are willing to demonstrate a public commitment to pregnancy prevention -- a commitment that conveys the message that early childbearing is not the only opportunity available to young people.

One valuable resource in this regard may be Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Coalitions which were functioning in most cities prior to New Futures. Usually comprised of knowledgeable health and human services providers, this group sometimes has staff, and often has some amount of state or federal funding to spend to develop and communicate this message. Working with school personnel and other community representatives, these

Coalitions can strengthen efforts that keep the pregnancy issue visible and generate and maintain community support. Cities may also want to consider including Coalitions on the Oversight Collaborative or using Coalition staff as a resource for the New Futures administrative staff either through written agreements, volunteer assistance, or actual loaned staff capacity.

Another model that some communities have successfully used to garner support involves linking school-based sex education with new requirements for AIDS education. AIDS education is now being mandated in many school districts, providing the opportunity to develop good sexuality education in the context of good health education. Planners should be aware of what the mandate is in the local district, identify who is responsible for developing the curriculum and staff development, and work in collaboration with them to ensure that efforts are compatible.

Support is also necessary from the service delivery level as buy-in from staff who work directly with young people is critical to successful implementation. The people responsible for teaching children and youth about sexuality must be knowledgeable and feel comfortable presenting such information. One way of developing this is through intensive and comprehensive staff development. Teachers need to know about reproductive physiology, family sociology, and contraceptives and be prepared to answer questions concerning sexual identity, sexually transmitted diseases, and sexual abuse. And while their responses must be direct, they must also be sensitive to family values and the community environment. Such training is specialized, and on-going -- occasional in-service sessions or a three-day summer course is usually not sufficient.

One particularly difficult issue around which to gather support is providing teenagers access to health services. Some New Futures cities may face opposition to establishing adolescent health clinics, whether they are located at the school or in the community and whether or not they dispense contraceptives. Given this, it is particularly important to employ effective constituency-building strategies and to have the clear support of leaders on the Oversight Collaborative. In many communities, the most vocal supporters of school- or community-based health clinics have been the parents of the students they are designed to serve. Frequently, the "opposition" comes from people who live outside the community, who do not have children, or whose children do not attend the targeted schools. Parents can be among the most

effective allies in off-setting such opposition if they view health clincs as a service they need and want for their own children. It may be helpful, if there is a target neighborhood or targeted set of youth to be served, to start with that community and the parents of the children who will be involved several months before the program is scheduled to start. The philosophy, objectives, and roles envisioned for parents should be made explicit. Using parents and community leaders to help with problem diagnosis and idea generation for solutions has been used with some success.

Finally, state government can play an invaluable role in stimulating, facilitating, and supporting community actions to prevent adolescent pregnancy. States have the capacity to bring the full range of programs -- dropout prevention, jobs efforts, early childhood education, or day care initiatives -- to bear on addressing the problems of adolescent pregnancy prevention. New Futures communities have been asked to develop clear expectations of the assistance they can get from state government. In the area of teen pregnancy, the state agenda may call for policy changes, financial support, technical assistance, and assistance with documenting results.

IV. Activities for the second year

Oversight Collaborative members and New Futures staff should not be bound by the design for pregnancy prevention services developed for their original plans. The second year plan should be explicit about integrating the school improvement and career and college opportunity activities with the pregnancy prevention strategy and should be clear about developing a process for organizing community support for teen pregnancy prevention interventions. Equally important will be efforts to pull together the available education, health and human services identified in the New Futures baseline evaluation as an aid in forming a foundation for cohesive service delivery system.

The first step should be to develop a community process to focus on and emphasize the problems associated with teen pregnancy. This process needs to incorporate all the major actors involved in teen pregnancy prevention services in order to explore ways of moving the current teen pregnancy agenda. Cities need to acknowledge that because a strong strategy in this area may need to evolve over the next few years, there is a need to develop an organization and process that can respond to the problem.

Once this has been accomplished, it will be necessary to re-examine the array of services needed to address the issue. Although we have described a basic range of services that have been shown to be effective, we know that each community must make the critical decisions about what specific approaches will work best locally. We do not require that every element be implemented beginning next year. However, it is necessary for each city to carefully review the current plan with an eye to how to change or expand it. In doing so, the following questions should be asked:

- What have you learned about the current service system? What gaps in services exist for segments of the teenage population or for certain areas of the city?

- What have you learned about the range of community attitudes? Do you have a plan for developing broad-based community support for your planned interventions?

- Is the institutional reform agenda related to schools and other agencies sufficient to motivate youth to avoid pregnancy?

- Have first year programs been evaluated for effectiveness prior to expanding them to other schools/agencies/grades?

- Have sufficient resources been allocated for staff development for adults who work with young people? Are parents included in your plan of services?

- Does the teen pregnancy strategy begin to deal with the significant fragmentation of services defined in the original plan, and does it recognize the diverse needs within the teenage population?

- Will spending patterns be changed to cover the costs of establishing new programs or expanding current services?

Although developing and fully implementing a system-wide teen pregnancy prevention program will take considerable time, an honest self-appraisal, based on the questions listed above, will put most cities on a firm footing for determining and achieving the progress they believe they should make in future years.

V. Technical assistance plans

The New Futures Institute is currently developing an appropriate inventory of human and material resources to help New Futures communities to better develop and implement a teen pregnancy prevention strategy. Through the Institute, we will arrange workshops, both on-site and off-site for New Futures staff and others selected by each city. Over the course of the year, we will develop a strategy to work with each city on the most important elements of its plan, with an emphasis on developing the support needed to move forward.

VI. Conclusion

The Foundation recognizes that implementing a broad-based teen pregnancy prevention system is one of the more difficult tasks facing New Futures cities. We know that each community's plan will differ in specifics, but that each will include substantial changes in the way this sometimes controversial topic is approached. All elements of the city's leadership -- the Oversight Collaborative, parents, church organizations, schools and health systems -- will be required to take stands that help young people to improve their capacity to avoid pregnancy. While this may mean developing adequate sex education and providing access to health services, it also means changes in the social environment through improved education, job and college opportunities, and social supports.